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# ICO Matters

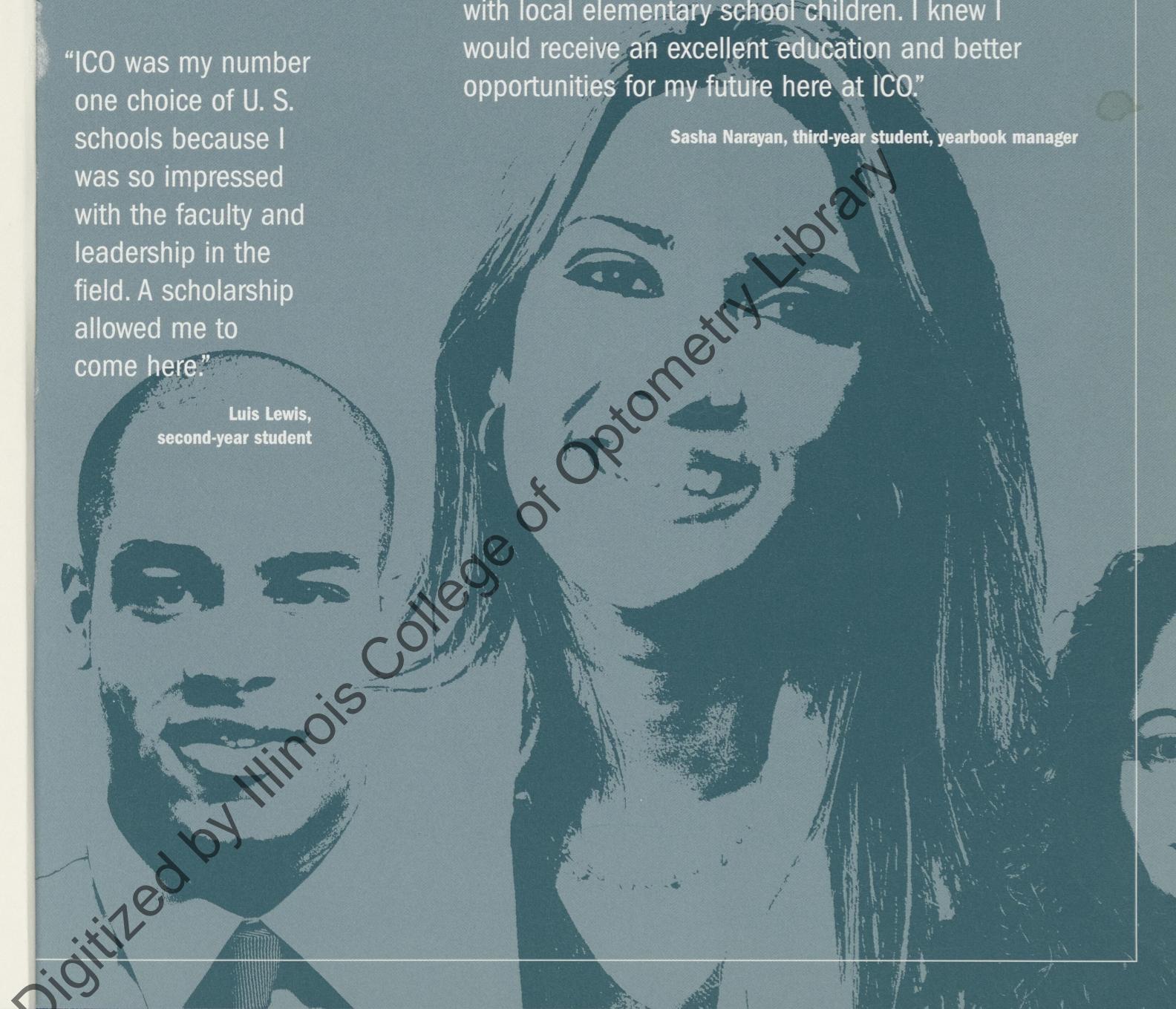
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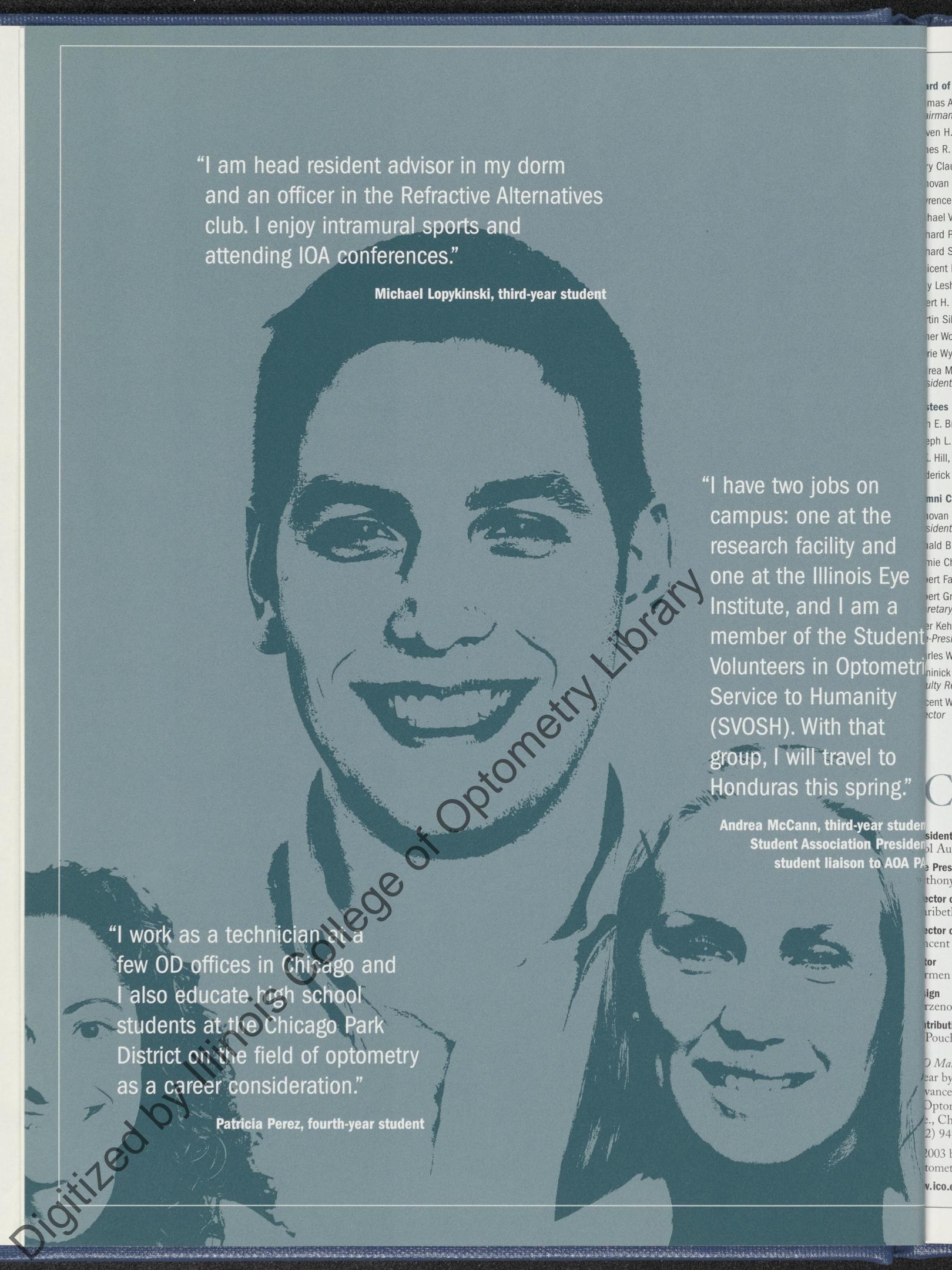
"ICO was my number one choice of U. S. schools because I was so impressed with the faculty and leadership in the field. A scholarship allowed me to come here."

Luis Lewis,  
second-year student

"I helped launch the mentoring and tutor program and the reading program that connects ICO students with local elementary school children. I knew I would receive an excellent education and better opportunities for my future here at ICO."

Sasha Narayan, third-year student, yearbook manager





"I am head resident advisor in my dorm and an officer in the Refractive Alternatives club. I enjoy intramural sports and attending IOA conferences."

**Michael Lopykinski, third-year student**

"I work as a technician at a few OD offices in Chicago and I also educate high school students at the Chicago Park District on the field of optometry as a career consideration."

**Patricia Perez, fourth-year student**

"I have two jobs on campus: one at the research facility and one at the Illinois Eye Institute, and I am a member of the Student Volunteers in Optometry Service to Humanity (SVOSH). With that group, I will travel to Honduras this spring."

**Andrea McCann, third-year student  
Student Association President  
student liaison to AOA PA**

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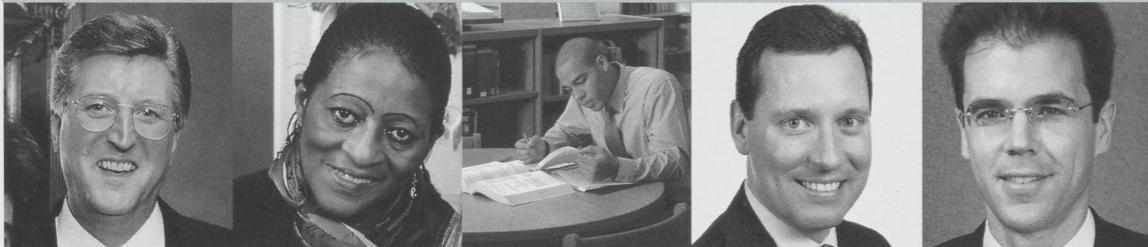
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Cover & inside cover: Illinois College of Optometry students  
have more to offer than eye care.

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# A Word with Dr. Lawless

## Chairman of the Board of Trustees



Dear alumni and friends,

It is with a great deal of enthusiasm and pride that I write to you as I begin my second year as Chairman of the Board of Trustees at ICO. It is amazing how much our institution has accomplished over the past year. I hope you will take some time to review our Annual Report so you can share the vitality and energy that exists on ICO's campus today.

The renaissance at the Illinois College of Optometry is ongoing. I am privileged to serve on our Board with 14 diverse, very dedicated and extremely talented individuals, all of whom are committed to the ongoing development of our College. This commitment became most evident during the presidential search process. The Trustees were determined to conduct a detailed, diligent and thorough presidential search to bring a candidate to the College who would continue to build on the achievements of Dr. Charles F. Mullen. This effort came to a successful conclusion when Dr. Arol Augsburger was named the 5th president of the Illinois College of Optometry last October. The Trustees are confident that Dr. Augsburger possesses the skills to guide our institution as President, and we look forward to many prosperous and productive years at ICO under his leadership.

In addition to finding Dr. Augsburger, one of the positive byproducts of the presidential search process was re-examining ICO's institutional priorities and goals. We know that a major factor in building ICO is going to be enthusiasm among our

alumni. Recently we have seen this enthusiasm in several very generous gifts from ICO alumni who felt compelled to acknowledge their pride in optometry and in their alma mater.

In the future, we will do our part to keep you "in the loop" by providing interesting and timely communications. We ask you to do your part by assisting our institution in three ways. First, visit ICO to re-establish your connection with our College. Interacting with the students, faculty and administration will confirm why ICO is the premiere optometric institution. Second, please support ICO financially. And third, encourage students considering optometry to choose the Illinois College of Optometry for their education. This is critical to the ongoing vitality of the institution.

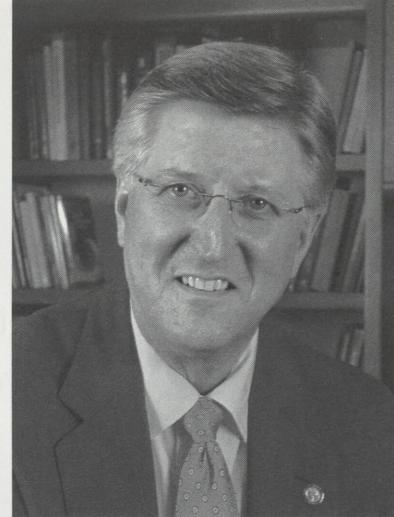
As you read through this Annual Report, I hope the articles will make you proud. Sharing these accomplishments with you is a great pleasure. Your support and assistance over these past decades has contributed to the tradition of excellence at ICO. We look forward to working with you into the future.

With kindest personal regards and best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thomas A. Lawless OD '71".

Thomas A. Lawless, OD '71  
Chairman

# A Message from the President



Greetings to all members of the ICO community.

As I begin my tenure as President of the Illinois College of Optometry, I am most impressed by the energy and commitment of ICO's fine students, faculty, staff, administrators, members of the Board of Trustees, and most importantly our alumni. You are the ones who give our program its real distinction, and I am honored to be here with you.

Historically ICO has had the greatest influence of any college on the evolution and development of optometry and optometric care in this country. I look forward to joining all of you in building on the traditions of excellence at the Illinois College of Optometry, and solidifying our position as America's College of Optometry.

In keeping with this, let me share with you my seven key principles:

## **1. Do what is right.**

This is sometimes difficult, but we need to carefully consider and direct our actions by what is right.

## **2. Tell the truth.**

There is no substitute for honesty in dealing with people. Even if we disagree, we need to be straightforward and truthful in our workings.

## **3. Raise the bar.**

We are certainly going to celebrate where we are and what we have accomplished, but we are not going to be satisfied. Indeed, I envision the Illinois College of Optometry to be "America's College of Optometry."

## **4. Work hard.**

I will be leading by example in this, but I know the people who work with the College are going to share that kind of commitment.

## **5. Be good stewards of the money.**

It is a costly proposition to run a first-class college of optometry, but I can assure you that the money will be used reasonably, properly, and with good stewardship.

## **6. Show respect for the faculty, students, staff, patients and constituents we serve.**

There is no substitute for treating people with dignity and respect and, even if we disagree, we don't have to be disagreeable.

## **7. Extend the role of the Illinois College of Optometry to assist the people in the communities and the constituent groups we serve.**

In other words, we will be looking at how to improve the quality of life for the people who are served by the very best eye and vision care practitioners in the world, that is, the American Optometrist.

In these endeavors, I appeal for your participation, your thoughts, your support, your understanding, and your enthusiasm. I look forward to the opportunity to work with you individually and collectively.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arol Augsburger".

Arol Augsburger, OD  
President, Illinois College of Optometry

## Keeping an Eye On Students

ICO students want to serve their community as well as their patients

Certainly the most obvious difference between ICO students today and those 10, 15, 20 or more years ago is the way they look. For one thing, there are a lot more women around. In fact, this year there are twice as many women as men in the entering class.

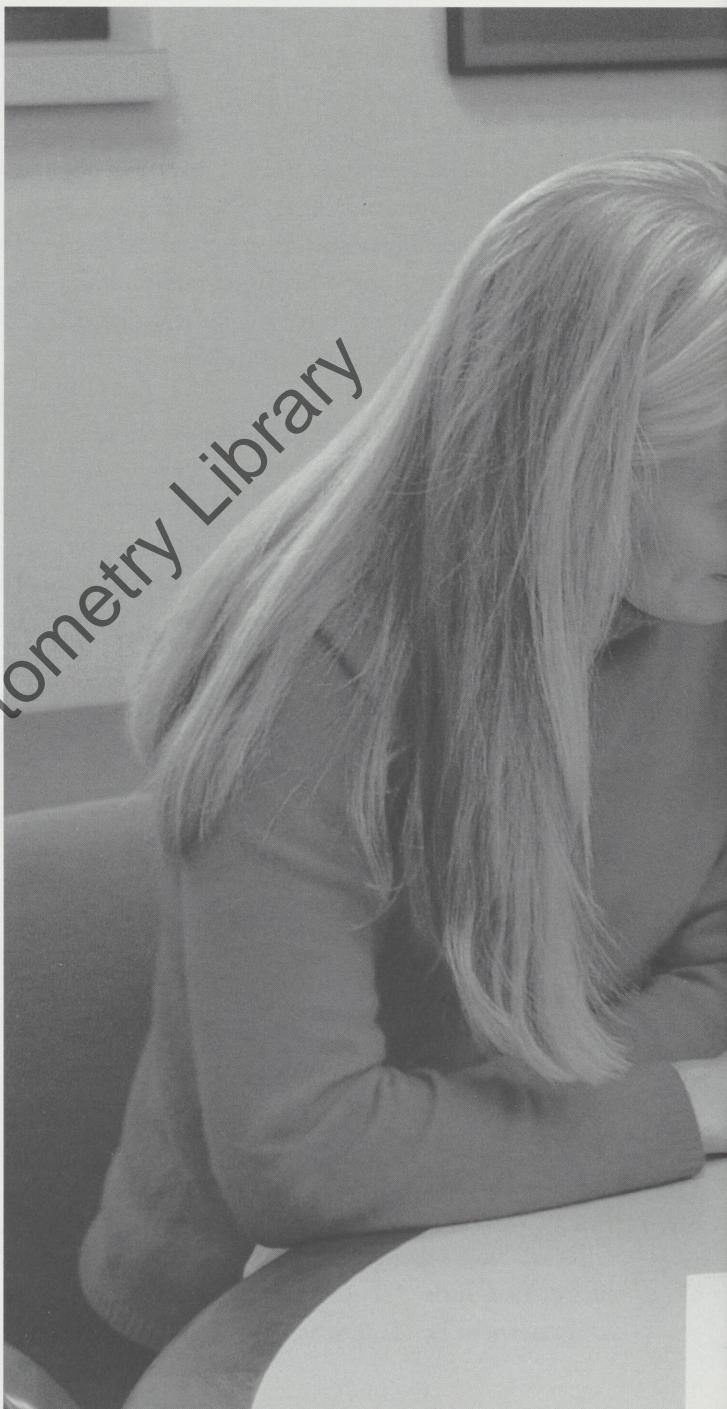
There is also a lot more diversity among the students currently enrolled at ICO. Nearly half of the first years are minorities, and international students come from countries stretching from Korea to Canada.

But according to Mark Colip, OD '92, Dean for Student Affairs, the most striking difference in ICO students today is their spirit of service and giving. "The students here now are more involved in the community than they have been in the past," he says. "They're into volunteerism. It's amazing what they accomplish along with the demands of the academic and clinical programs."

ICO's list of volunteer opportunities is long. Students can choose from more than 10 programs, ranging from helping elementary school children learn to read, to working on the holiday food drive to serving at the Free Family Health Fair on Chicago's North Side.

If they're not volunteering for community service, they're signing up to contribute to academic and professional clubs and organizations. One-third of the members

# The Spirit

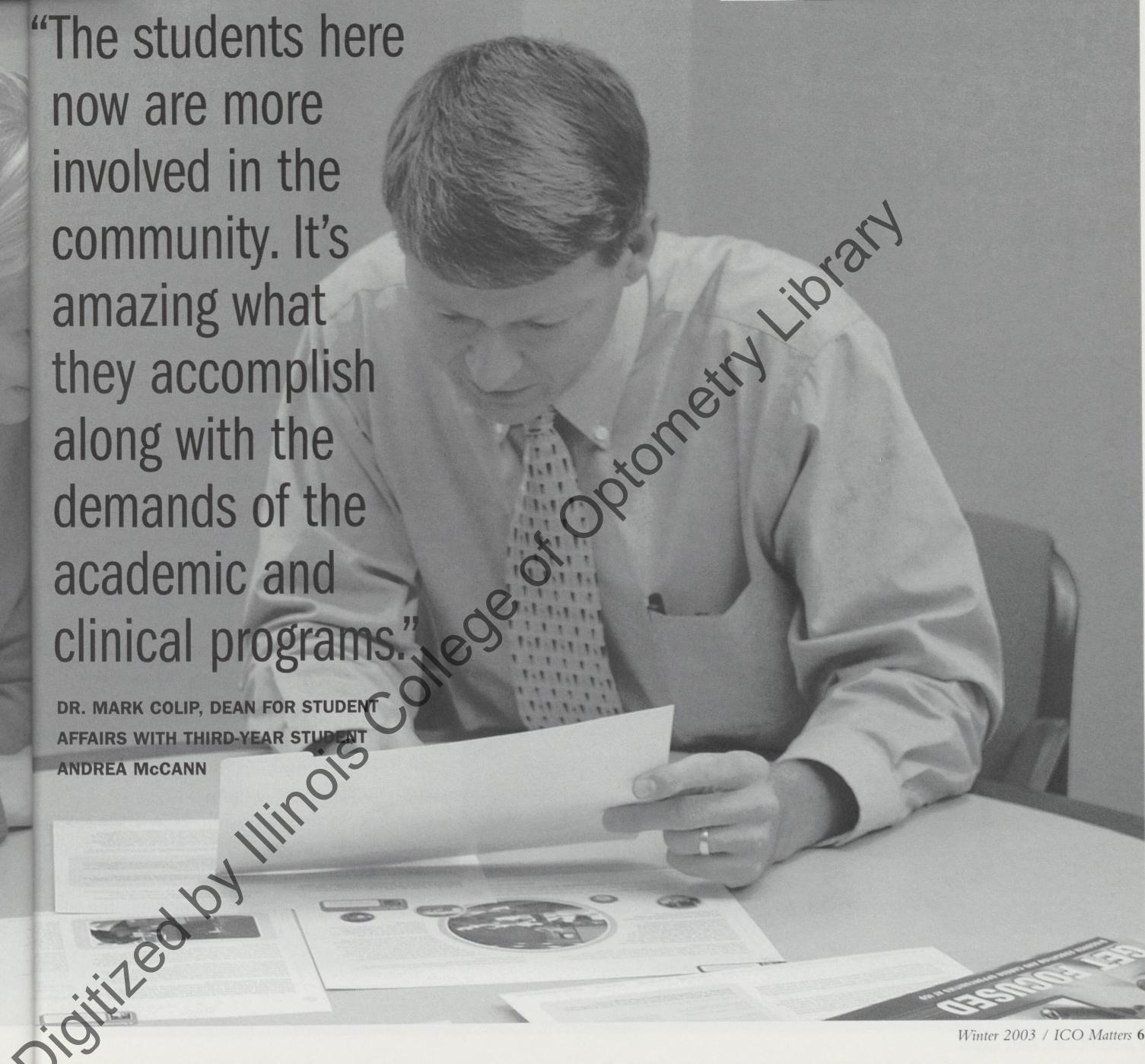
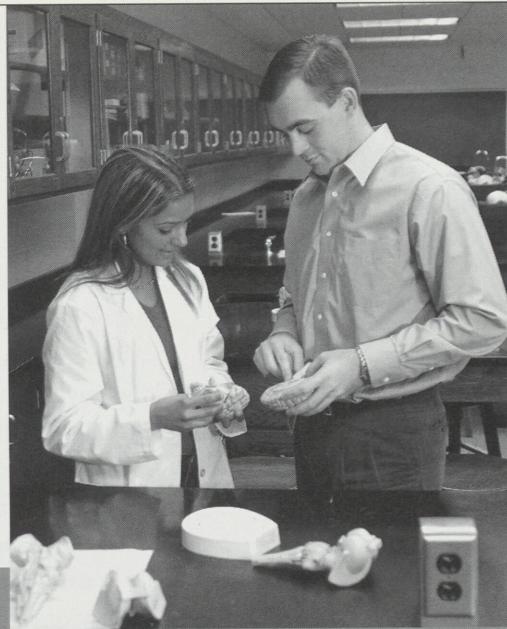


*Third-year students Sasha Narayan  
and Chris McDowell*

# bf Giving

“The students here now are more involved in the community. It’s amazing what they accomplish along with the demands of the academic and clinical programs.”

DR. MARK COLIP, DEAN FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS WITH THIRD-YEAR STUDENT ANDREA McCANN



## Keeping an Eye On Students

of the student body hold leadership positions in clubs or hold national offices.

"We enroll a different kind of student," Dr. Colip says. "I talk about service with applicants all the time. It's not just the numbers — GPA, OAT scores — that gain an applicant acceptance; we're looking for students who get out into the community, who want to develop fully as a doctor and live what it means to provide service to the community. It's the culture at ICO."

In keeping with this, a routine survey of first-year students consistently reports that ICO students hope to enter private practice when they graduate.

But a follow-up survey at graduation shows that many are not entering private practice for financial reasons.

Instead they go into corporate or employed optometry. "Students feel locked in because those particular opportunities guarantee a high income," Dr. Colip explains. "If students had less debt, they'd be more comfortable pursuing private practice optometry."

Many veterans in the eye care profession bristle at these new configurations in the practice of optometry. "It's a threat to their

way of doing business," says Dr. Colip. "What has gotten optometry where it is today is private practice."

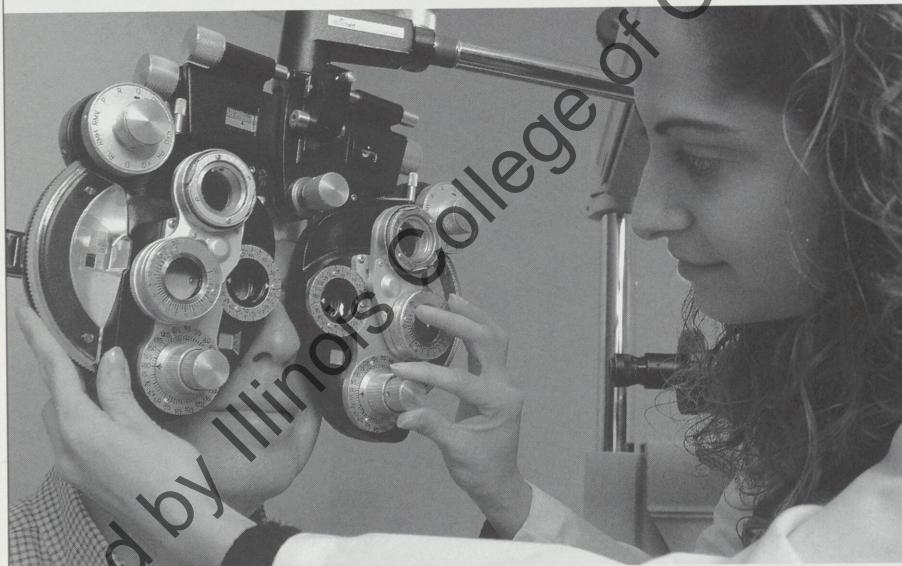
Current ICO students haven't forgotten this, Dr. Colip says, but, "They're debt-strapped. They feel they need that salary guarantee to satisfy their loan obligations." And while some would argue that ICO students have always faced debt, Dr. Colip counters, "The costs students face now are on such a larger scale. The complexities of entering practice today are enormous — the days of hanging out your shingle and opening cold are rare."

ICO students graduate with an average debt of \$145,000. Only approximately two-thirds of that amount is their cost of education from ICO. The remainder comes from living expenses, instruments, board fees, etc. The challenges of ICO's education today make it impossible for a student to work full-time to totally support themselves without financial assistance.

"There's an incredible internal effort by ICO's administration and Board of Trustees to control costs," Dr. Colip says. "We froze tuition for the past four years, for example, and streamlined the systems. But we have to be careful not to compromise the quality of the education."

As a result, the College has generated programs to further reduce tuition pressure and encourage private practice. And once they've graduated, ICO has programs to help new optometrists get established.

"In fact we want to offer as much scholarship support as possible to all students," Dr. Colip says. "They are worthy of support; they do and give so much. Our students are going to leave ICO and not be satisfied to practice and simply make money. They'll be leaders, involved in the profession. New ICO graduates carry on the traditions of leadership established by ICO alumni. I am confident we can and will be proud as they carry the torch down the road." ♦



Fourth-year student Patricia Perez testing her skills.



## Dwight Akerman, OD '80, broadens optometric horizons

In a first for the field of optometry, ICO alumnus Dwight H. Akerman, OD, FAAO '80, has taken a position usually reserved for an ophthalmologist: medical director for a major pharmaceutical company.

As medical director and head of global medical marketing for Novartis Ophthalmics, Dr. Akerman oversees the company's Phase IV clinical studies and research publications, surveys key opinion leaders in ophthalmology and optometry, and provides analysis for business development and licensing, among other responsibilities. ♦

His position is unique. "I think most people who attend optometry school do so because, first, they want to help people," Dr. Akerman says. "But secondly they want to be their own boss. I work in a corporation with 75,000 employees."

After stints in the contact lens

industry, punctuated by several years building a private practice in Georgia, Dr. Akerman now lives in Zurich, Switzerland, where he works for a subsidiary of one of the world's largest pharmaceutical companies.

In contrast to private practice, Dr. Akerman explains, an optometrist working in the corporate world cannot always expect to make a final decision. To be successful, "you have to know how to manage corporate politics," he adds. "It's very important to be able to work effectively as part of a cross-functional team." For Dr. Akerman, that team includes four MDs and two PhDs who report to him.

That may go against the grain of optometry's sense of independence, but the personal and professional benefits are potentially enormous.

One thing is clear to Dr. Akerman: "Training in optometry today is every

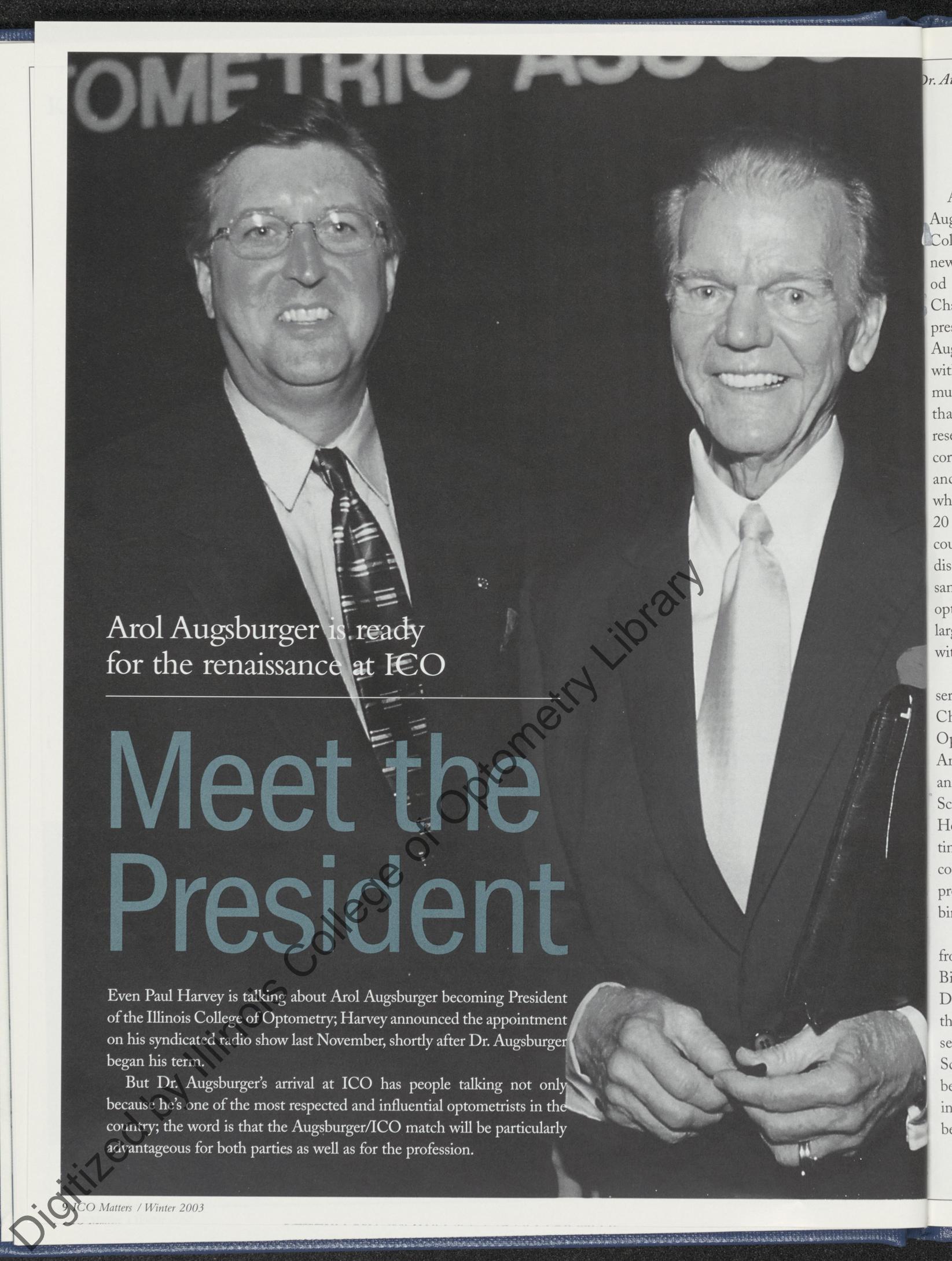
bit equivalent to training in ophthalmology, with respect to pharmacology and ocular disease management," he says. "Optometrists are now trained and capable of filling senior positions within major pharmaceutical companies." Dr. Akerman's advice to optometrists considering a corporate career: apply for the job, even if it calls for an MD.

Near the top of a global operation, Dr. Akerman continues his own managerial development. Every day, he says, he participates in meetings with staff members from Italy, France, Germany and other countries. "An issue will be cut and dry to me, but I'm always amazed at how different cultures view the world," he says. "Ultimately working in an international environment teaches tolerance and compromise. These are great lessons for all of us." ♦

Keeping an Eye  
On Alumni

# International Influence

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Arol Augsburger is ready  
for the renaissance at ICO

# Meet the President

Even Paul Harvey is talking about Arol Augsburger becoming President of the Illinois College of Optometry; Harvey announced the appointment on his syndicated radio show last November, shortly after Dr. Augsburger began his term.

But Dr. Augsburger's arrival at ICO has people talking not only because he's one of the most respected and influential optometrists in the country; the word is that the Augsburger/ICO match will be particularly advantageous for both parties as well as for the profession.

A man for all seasons, Dr. Augsburger arrives at the Illinois College of Optometry as it enters a new era, a renaissance after the period of reform introduced by Dr. Charles F. Mullen, who retired as president of ICO last fall. In part, Dr. Augsburger is uniquely compatible with ICO because of his capacity to multi-task. He has published more than 100 scientific papers, with research on subjects ranging from corneal physiology to visual performance. At Ohio State University, where Dr. Augsburger spent nearly 20 years of his career, he taught courses in general optometry, eye disease and pharmacology. At the same time, Dr. Augsburger ran the optometry clinics at Ohio State, the largest practice in the state of Ohio with 50,000 patient visits a year.

On the side, Dr. Augsburger has served in such professional roles as Chair of the Commission on Ophthalmic Standards for the American Optometric Association and President of the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry. He has participated regularly in continuing education courses across the country and acted as a consultant for products ranging from TV sets to binoculars to woven baskets.

Dr. Augsburger comes to ICO from the University of Alabama at Birmingham, where he served as Dean of the School of Optometry, then Interim Provost. During his seven-year tenure as Dean, the School of Optometry went from being the smallest school on campus in numbers of students and faculty to becoming the second largest school

on campus in its economic impact from research, patient care and income to the university.

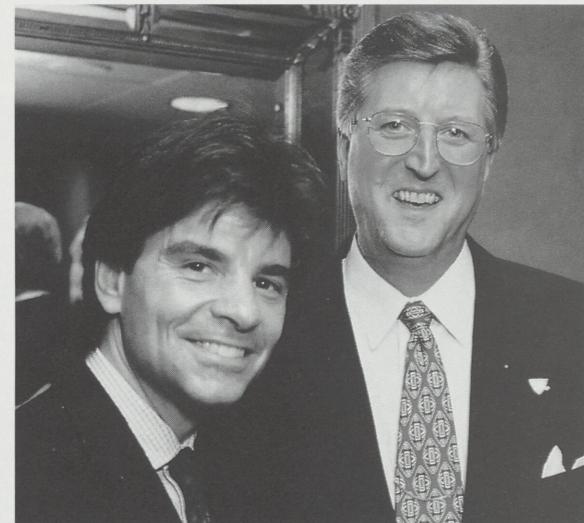
Though he was happy as Interim Provost at UAB, Dr. Augsburger says his appointment as President of the Illinois College of Optometry was just the kind challenge he relishes.

"I came to ICO because it presents an opportunity to be involved as the chief executive officer of an institution that really, if you look at the history of it, has probably had more influence on the course of optometry than any institution in the country," Dr. Augsburger says.

"It's also a chance to do something I haven't done before. I mean, yes, I've been an optometrist. I've been in leadership. I've been involved in building programs and starting from scratch," he continues. "But working at ICO is different because it's about the whole school operation. Being a provost at a big university like UAB is one thing and being president at a college like this is another. As a provost you can never really get your hands around the whole enterprise. Here as president with a very effective leadership team, you can see where you are, where you want to go and how you're going to get there. And you can measure it."

At this point, Dr. Augsburger's strategy is to "build on the strengths we have," he says. "I want to help us take the things we have done so well and extend them within our community. I'd like to develop the kinds of programs that have an impact on people's lives and on learning and on standards of vision performance."

A tall man, Dr. Augsburger has



Sharing a smile with news commentator George Stephanopoulos.

always filled big shoes. As a boy growing up outside Lima, Ohio, he figured he'd play professional sports when he grew up, either in the NBA or the NFL. Dr. Augsburger's first appreciation for optometry was the result of high school sports.

"When I played football, I wore glasses," Dr. Augsburger recalls. "I'd been wearing glasses since second grade. But during my freshman year, the athletic department and the athletic boosters at my school got together and paid for contact lenses for me. It changed my life."

And, Dr. Augsburger adds, "The doctor who fit me, J. Dean Courtard, OD '49, was a Northern Illinois College of Optometry graduate."

At a certain point, he continues, "It became apparent that maybe the dream of playing professional sports wasn't very realistic. And I did find, after the athletics, that vocal music and dramatics were something really important to me. There was a time

## Keeping an Eye On Campus

that I thought that the business of musical theater would be really fun.

"But it also became apparent," Dr. Augsburger says, "that there are an awful lot of people in that field who are parking cars and waiting tables."

So, Dr. Augsburger turned to his strength in academics. He majored in physiological optics as an undergraduate and graduated second in his class from the Ohio State University College of Optometry. At the same institution, after he earned his OD degree, Dr. Augsburger joined the faculty. "I was Mr. Ohio State," Dr. Augsburger says. "I figured I'd probably retire there."

But the opportunities afforded at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and now at the Illinois College of Optometry have been too good to pass up. In his role as President of ICO, Dr. Augsburger will be in the position to broaden his influence in the profession he has loved for more than 30 years.

"There are so many things that are just terrific about being an optometrist," Dr. Augsburger says. "Optometrists improve people's lives. Whether you're doing direct patient care or helping out with vision standards, evaluations or performance, you're helping people."

"Because," he continues, "when it really comes down to it, optometry is a great people profession. Your greatest successes come through interacting with people, by helping them achieve what they'd like to do by improving their vision. And in the meantime you've helped set up some common goals and you've made

progress together. And that's the art of politics, of leadership, of really moving from the status quo to collectively achieving new kinds of things. That's when it's really, really rewarding."

By the same token, Dr. Augsburger has found great reward in his family. He married his high school sweetheart, Stephanie, in

context of family connection. It's a balancing act, and it's a healthy balancing act if it's done right."

Balancing is exactly what Dr. Augsburger has been doing since he arrived at ICO. In addition to gaining a general orientation for the College and its internal mechanisms, he has begun a civic outreach program that will further establish ICO as a major educational and health care institution in the city. During his first month, Dr. Augsburger was invited to meet with a range of government and business executives, including Donald Trump, Jesse Jackson and Dennis Hastert. He attended newly elected Illinois governor Rod Blagojevich's victory celebration.

"A different kind of extension of the College is ICO's involvement in the community," Dr. Augsburger says. "We're an economic force and a player in the revitalization of the area. Certainly people understand that the Illinois Eye Institute is a wonderful place where you have eye exams and take care of other problems related to vision. But we have been active in a range of civic interests. For example, in the local schools we consult on lighting, reading, eye movement skills."

"The quality of the institution is in place," Dr. Augsburger concludes. "It is strong, it has key people in the right kind of positions and it has a track record of contributing. Now we want to spread the word about the quality that exists here and to make an even bigger difference in people's lives." ♦

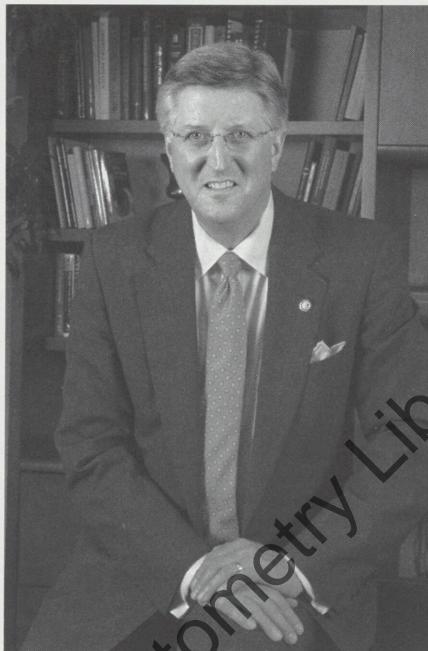


Photo: Lloyd DeGrane

1967, and they had three sons. Today the Augsburger's children and their wives and families, including five grandchildren, all live in Ohio. Dr. Augsburger says that's one reason he and Mrs. Augsburger are pleased to be back in the Midwest.

"There's no doubt that family is a key part of what makes me tick," Dr. Augsburger says. "It always has been. And it's something I champion for our employees. I'm a great advocate of being involved in what you do professionally, but putting your enthusiasm into that has to be in the

Anthony A. D'Andrea launches a fundraising plan for students, patients and practitioners

# Shaping the Future

When Anthony D'Andrea began his job as ICO's Vice President for Development a year ago, he knew his first priority: raise money for scholarships. Illinois College of Optometry students graduate with an average debt of \$145,000; something had to be done to lighten that load.

As Mr. D'Andrea found, the effect of such debt is pervasive. Incoming students have to think hard about how to finance their education. Graduates face the reality of loans to repay, which impacts their selection when deciding what type of practice opportunity to pursue.

One effort to direct money toward scholarship support was ICO's decision to eliminate Alumni Association dues in 2001. "We feel all our alumni are part of the Alumni Association whether they pay dues or not," Mr. D'Andrea says. "Instead of giving dues, alumni can contribute to the Student Scholarship Initiative. One hundred percent of all gifts to the fund are used

directly for student scholarships."

Another goal of ICO's development plan is to raise endowed and expendable funds for private practice initiatives. "The foundation of optometry was built on private practice," Mr. D'Andrea says. "We're going to provide students with assistance if they pursue that route. We also want to help facilitate the succession of practices from older doctors to recent ICO graduates. But to do this will require significant financial support."

Other initiatives for fundraising include support for ICO's clinical programs. For example, a priority is support for the Vision of Hope program at the Illinois Eye Institute, which provides optometric care to the uninsured and underinsured.

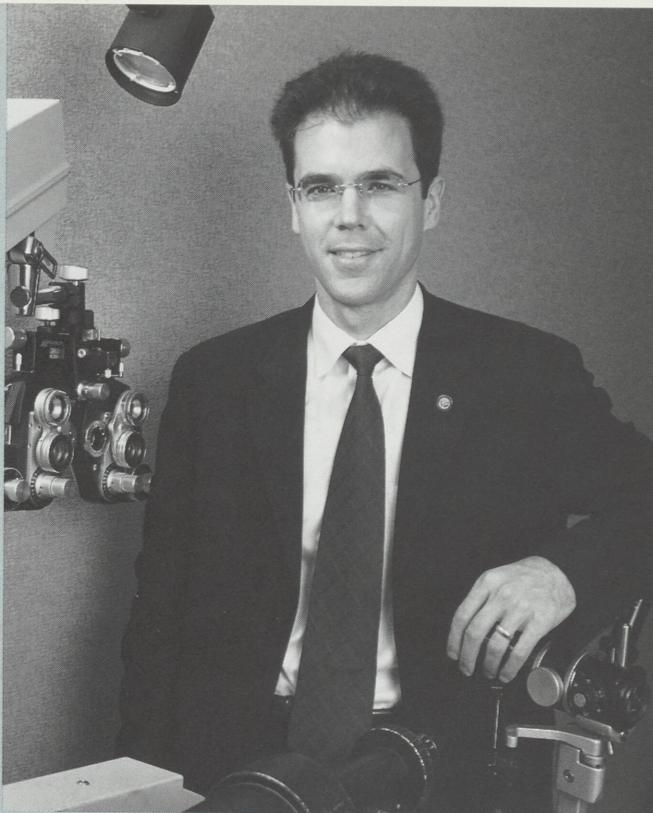
Support for programs for primary pediatric eye care is another ICO project, and a personal pledge for Mr. D'Andrea. As a child, he had a slightly-crossed amblyopic left eye. "I grew up going from eye specialist to eye special-

ist," Mr. D'Andrea recalls. "Now if it's caught when you're young, vision therapy can strengthen the eye."

"But," he continues, "when my nephew turned up with a similar condition, he was treated at the Illinois Eye Institute. My sister was very impressed with the service here. It's a very high priority to ensure that all children have access to regular eye care early in their lives."

In addition, Mr. D'Andrea will place greater emphasis on winning foundation grants and on spreading the word about including the College in estate plans. "We get estate gifts that are people's hard-earned life savings. They trust us to use it for worthy purposes," he says. "We take that very seriously."

The challenge, Mr. D'Andrea says, is harnessing all the potential at the Illinois College of Optometry. "It wakes me up in the middle of the night," he says. "There's no question, it's an exciting place to be." ♦



# For Eyes Only

## An ICO proposal for the first eye-only surgery center on Chicago's South Side

About five years ago, Dr. Leonard Messner, Vice President for Patient Care Services, attended a meeting with Dean for Academic Affairs, Dr. Janice Scharre, former ICO President Dr. Charles Mullen and Dr. Terry Ernest, Chair of Ophthalmology and Visual Science at the University of Chicago. The group discussed a paper Dr. Mullen had written about an innovative partnership of optometry with ophthalmology. In response to that paper, Dr. Ernest had created a proposal.

The group discussed a collaboration between the Illinois Eye Institute and the University of Chicago to deliver a comprehensive eye care model. IEI would provide all services leading up to surgery. U of C would provide the surgery.

Today that idea had grown into a model program for integrated clinical, training and research projects at ICO and U of C, with plans for a state-of-the-art Ambulatory Surgery & Treatment Center at the corner of Indiana Avenue and 32nd Street.

"All services would be provided within our campus environment," Dr. Messner says. "It would allow us to offer the population on Chicago's South Side an advanced level of eye care."

Once the schools started talking back in 1997, Dr. Messner recalls, the plan became "a high priority initiative on

both sides." It was in the interest of ICO because it facilitates the primary care role IEI optometrists serve with their patients. The doctors can follow through more fully with their patients, working closely with U of C ophthalmologists over the course of treatment.

The idea for the partnership is attractive to the University of Chicago because it streamlines U of C's referrals for therapy at IEI and enables the University to expand its facilities. Ophthalmologists on the University's main campus need operating room space. As it stands, their patients often wait for treatment while their surgeons wait for time on the schedule. A new outpatient surgery center, a surgicenter, located 10 minutes away at ICO will alleviate the problem, while consolidating the relationship between the two institutions.

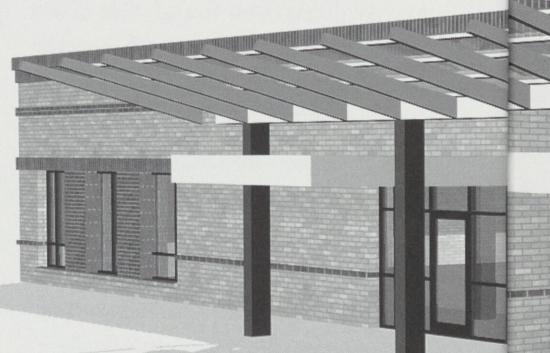
"Between the two of us," Dr. Messner says, "we have 100,000 patient visits a year. With the number of surgeries generated from those visits, a surgicenter was the next logical step."

In taking that step, the institutions presented a Certificate of Need to the Illinois Health Facilities Planning Board in December, 2002. "We are hopeful they will approve our proposal," he says.

According to Dr. Messner, outpatient surgicenters are becoming more prevalent in the eyecare service industry. Ophthalmologists were some of the first surgeons to embrace the concept, which is naturally suited to the field since there are a low number of cases that actually require a full service hospital. And, according to a 1999 finding by the OIG, ambulatory surgicenters not only reduce costs, they boost patient satisfaction.

"The big thing is getting patients booked for surgery," Dr. Messner says. "Surgicenters can handle eye patients more efficiently than hospitals."

Another advantage of the partnership



**"It would allow us to"**

## Keeping an Eye On Faculty

for ICO is that it provides a galvanized framework for clinical research opportunities. Close association with U of C's department of ophthalmology will engender increased cross-disciplinary scientific investigations. "There's a lot of learning that goes on when people come together," Dr. Messner says. "Down the line this will provide us with research facilities that not only accommodate

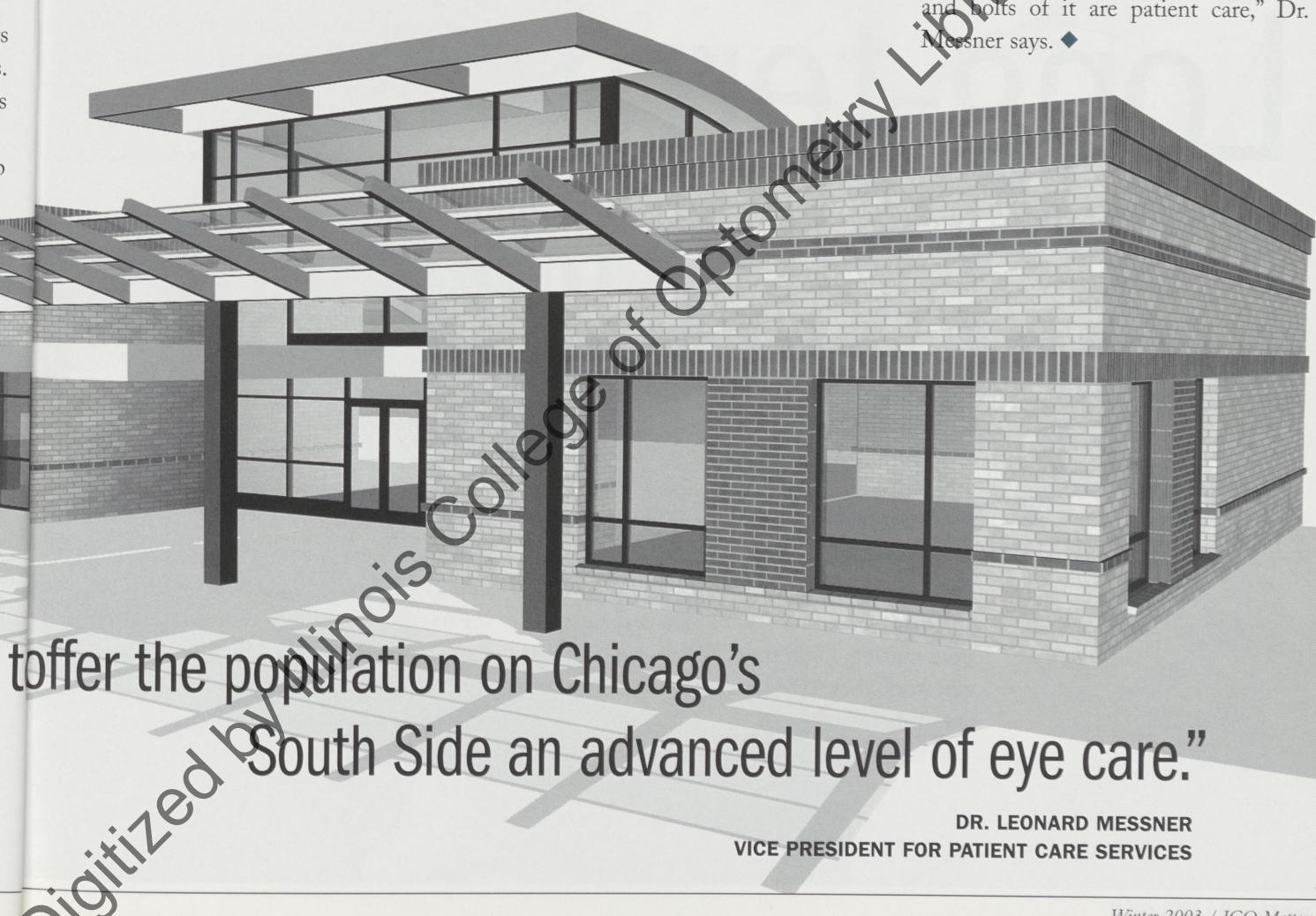
large grant projects but also facilitate further teaching initiatives. Students and residents from both institutions will have more opportunities."

In the end, the ICO/U of C alliance, "identifies the College as a leader in the profession," Dr. Messner says.

It also literally further grounds ICO as an anchor of Chicago's South Side. At a time when the area is enjoying wide-

spread resurgence, the Illinois Eye Institute and the College find themselves at the center of influence. "We view the surgicenter as our footprint in the South Side renaissance," Dr. Messner explains. "It underscores our commitment to the neighborhood and our community."

But most importantly, the surgicenter underscores the Illinois Eye Institute's commitment to its patients. "The nuts and bolts of it are patient care," Dr. Messner says. ♦



## Keeping an Eye On Patients

Laura Harris remembers her childhood visits to the Illinois Eye Institute in the mid-1950s: "There were only three or four rooms in the clinic back then," she says. "And even though I was just a little girl who needed glasses, everyone was so attentive and kind, it made me feel special."

Over the years, Ms. Harris has witnessed a lot of changes at the clinic. "It's much larger now and the technology is much more advanced," she says. "But the people are the same: everyone is so dedicated."

Ms. Harris knows. In 1979 she was diagnosed with Sarcoidosis — a multi-system inflammatory disorder that can affect every part of the body. According to her doctor, Trish Newman, OD, Chief, Center for Advanced Ophthalmic Care, "Cases can be very mild to very severe and profound. Patients can present with everything from joint pain to asthma-like symptoms, or iritis." Ms. Harris has experi-

in 1992, Ms. Harris was experiencing a particularly bad flare-up of her disease, but had insisted on going to work. "I was so sick that day they literally had to wheel me out in a wheelchair."

Since then Ms. Harris has continued to be a fighter. She now spends her time supporting those living with Sarcoidosis and educating others about the disease. She and some other Sarcoidosis survivors started a Sarcoidosis support group that meets once a month and has more than 50 members. She and other support group board members also organize local conferences and appear on a regular cable program to discuss issues related to Sarcoidosis.

"Ms. Harris is one of my favorite patients," says Dr. Newman, who has worked with Ms. Harris since her diagnosis. "She's not only a lovely person, she's a fantastic advocate for those suffering with Sarcoidosis."

Much about this disease is still a mystery to the medical community. It is not known whether Sarcoidosis is hereditary or why it attacks a particular organ of the body. What is known about Sarcoidosis is that in the United States it affects a disproportionate number of African-Americans. Because of the disease's puzzling nature, having an advocate like Laura

# Long-term Relationship

Laura Harris  
and the  
Illinois Eye  
Institute go  
way back

enced several bouts of iritis, a common ocular manifestation of Sarcoidosis.

Nonetheless, Ms. Harris did not want her condition to damper her life or keep her from working. A Licensed Practical Nurse from 1970 to 1992, Ms. Harris says, "I told everyone that Sarcoidosis was not going to keep me from nursing. I told them if they wanted me to quit work, they were going to have to wheel me out of there!"

In fact, that's exactly what happened. One day

Harris raising awareness about Sarcoidosis is vital, says Dr. Newman.

"I just feel honored to be connected to such a wonderful institution," Ms. Harris says. "I've received tremendous care at IEI since I was a little girl. If I can give a little bit back by helping to raise community awareness and assisting those with Sarcoidosis, I'm happy to do it."

*For more information about the Chicago South Side Sarcoidosis Support Group, call (773) 285-2608. ♦*

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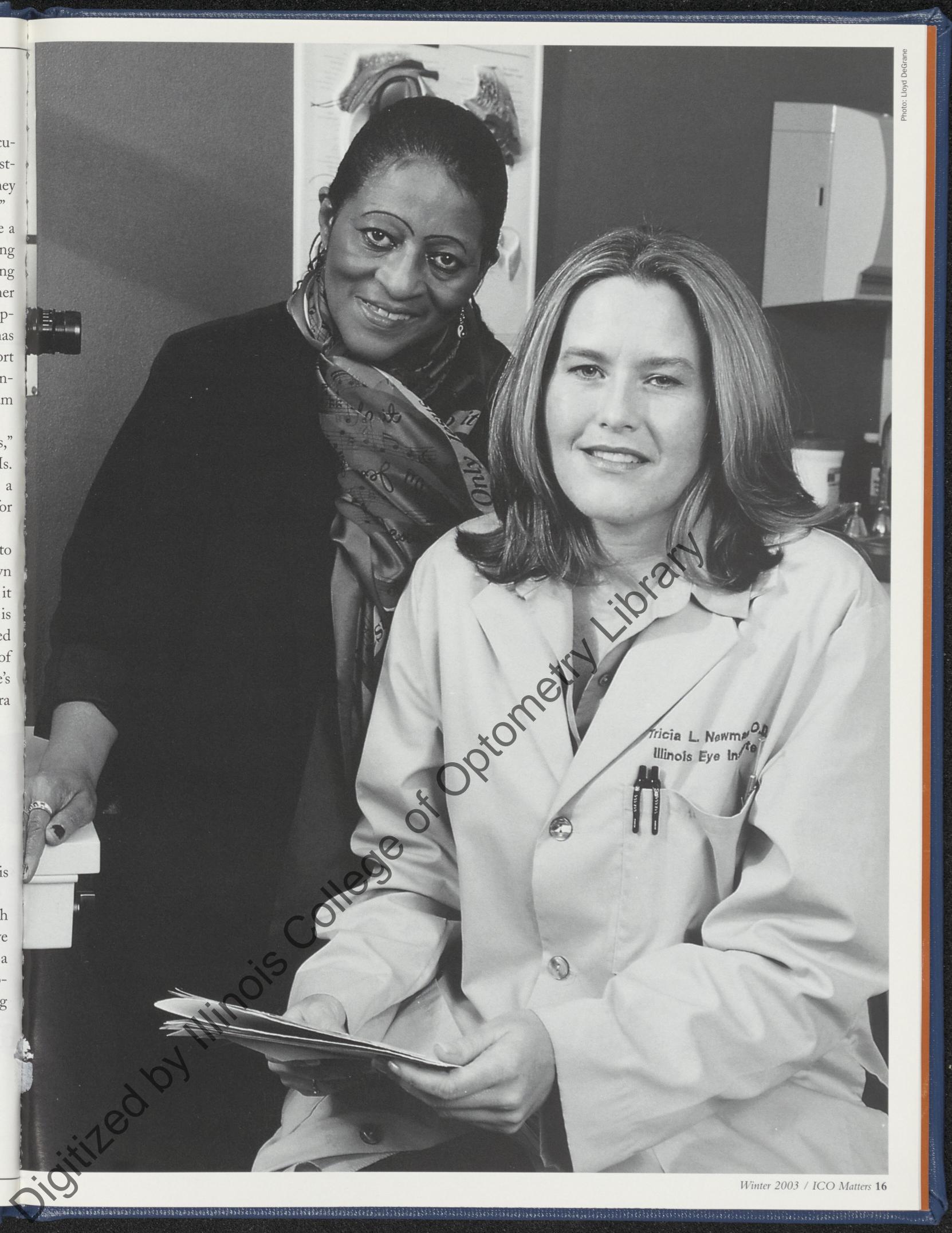


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*The Legacy Society, the Illinois College of Optometry's planned giving society, recognizes individuals who have included the College in their will or estate plans. Please notify us if you have named the College so we can thank you for your generosity and add your name to list of Legacy Society members.*

## Grants

Alcon Laboratories, Inc.  
Department of Education -  
    Federal Work Study  
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Every attempt has been made to ensure the accuracy of this report. If your name does not appear, or if it is listed incorrectly, please accept our apologies and our gratitude. In the case of error or omission or for more information about making a gift to ICO, please call the Office of Institutional Advancement at 312/949-7074.

Thank you.

This report summarizes the Illinois College of Optometry's unrestricted operating revenue and expenditures from July 1, 2001 to June 30, 2002.

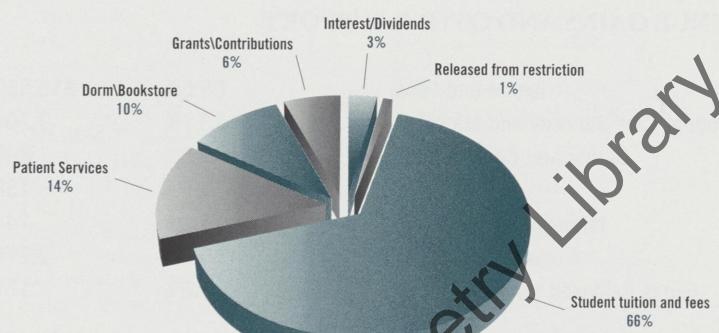
# 2001-2002 Financial Report

	Percent of Operating Activity	2002 Total Unrestricted
<b>REVENUE GAINS AND OTHER SUPPORT</b>		
Tuition and Fees	66.6%	\$15,550,628
Patient Care Services and Materials	13.7%	3,204,861
Grants and Contributions	5.6%	1,300,561
Other	0.6%	138,064
Interest and Dividends	3.2%	741,403
Auxiliary Enterprises	9.7%	2,270,891
Funds Released from Restriction	0.6%	151,098
Total	100.0%	\$23,357,506
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Instruction	33.2%	\$7,755,829
Academic Support	5.8%	1,351,592
Student Services	7.8%	1,823,229
Patient Care Operations	17.1%	3,999,968
Auxiliary Enterprises	9.5%	2,208,668
Institutional Support	26.6%	6,198,924
Total	100.0%	\$23,338,210
Change in Net Assets		
From Operating Activities		\$19,296
Non Operating Activities		(\$2,800,143)
Change in Net Assets		(\$2,780,847)
Net Assets at Beginning of Year		\$20,976,499
Net Assets at End of Year		\$18,195,652

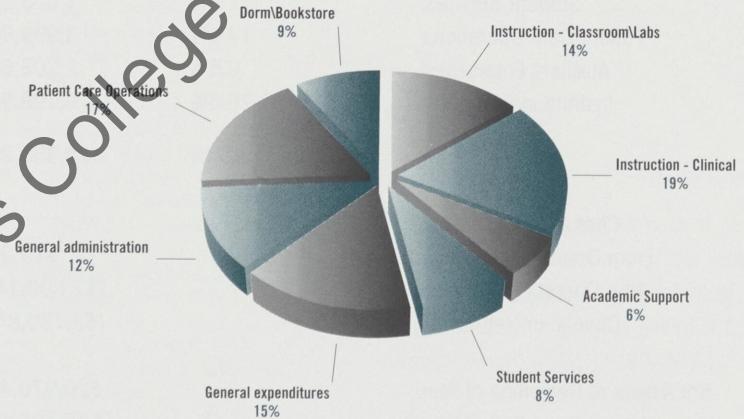
The following pie charts summarize the Illinois College of Optometry's unrestricted operating revenue and expenditures from July 1, 2001 to June 30, 2002.

# 2001-2002 Financial Report

Unrestricted Operating Revenue: \$23,357,506



Unrestricted Operating Expenditures: \$23,338,210



# *Save the Date!*

**November 7-9, 2003**

Come one, come all to  
**ICO's 2003 Alumni Reunion.**

Join friends, colleagues and special guests **Mike Ditka**,  
Chicago Bears legend, **James Colgain**, OD '83,  
along with ICO Faculty for a **weekend**  
of reminiscing and continuing education at the  
**Illinois College of Optometry.**

**Continuing Education** classes are  
complimentary to all alumni.

The **Reunion** is made possible in part through a  
generous educational grant from **Alcon Laboratories**.

*For more information call  
Vincent W. Brandys, OD '90 at (312) 949-7079.*



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*Remember When...*



#### Science Times

The laboratory bench was a more formal place for ICO students studying science in the 1950s.

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# ICO Matters

Magazine of the Illinois College of Optometry  
and the Illinois Eye Institute

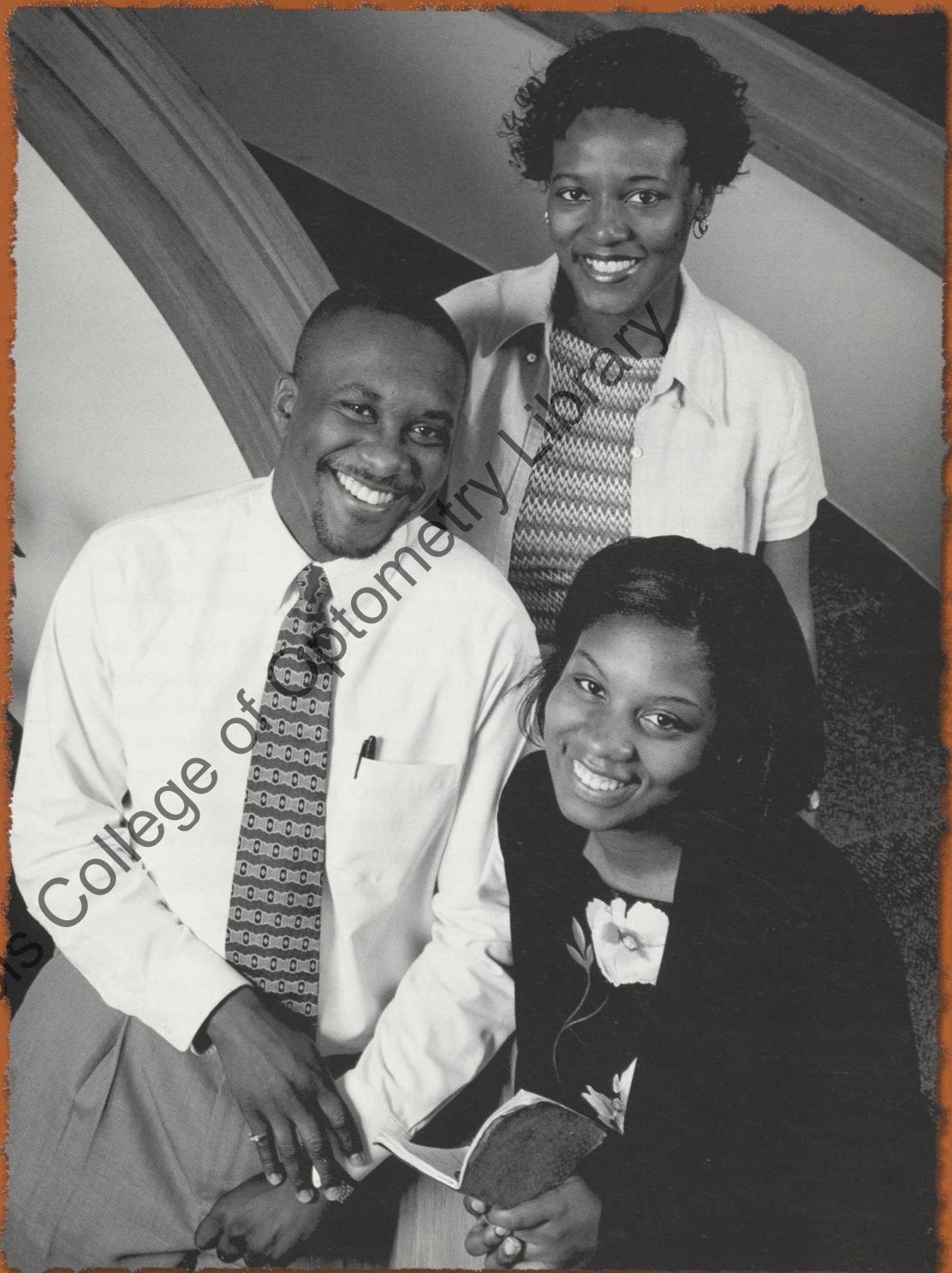
Volume 2 / Issue 2 / Spring 2003

## Building the Future

African-American  
students establish  
a new presence  
on campus

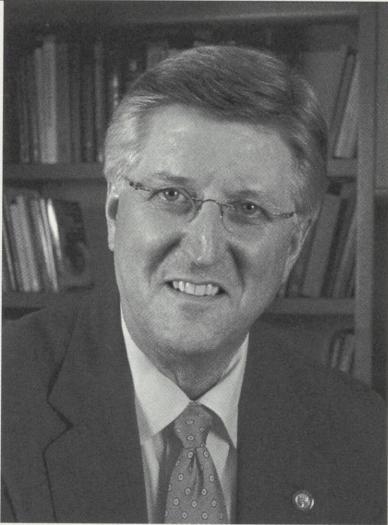
## Save the Date

Alumni Reunion 2003  
November 8-9



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# A Message from the President



Dear Alumni, Colleagues and Friends,

Halfway through my first year as President of the Illinois College of Optometry, I have had an opportunity to meet hundreds of our alumni and friends. Thank you for your warm welcome.

During these introductions, many of you have shared your anxiety over the administrative issues faced by ICO in years past, but nearly always have added that ICO graduates left this institution with a solid, clinically-based education and were prepared to serve their patients well.

One of the key reasons I left my position as Interim Provost at the University of Alabama-Birmingham to come to ICO was the opportunity to build on the long history at ICO, and in conjunction with our alumni, faculty, students and staff, take this institution to uncharted heights. I am very pleased to be able to share with you today that the institution and the education we are able to deliver have never been better.

I am committed to "raising the bar" at ICO even higher. With the help of administrators such as Janice Scharre, OD '76, MA, Dean of Academic Affairs, who promotes our sense of community while expanding educational opportunities, and Mark Colip, OD '92, Dean for Student Affairs, who provides outstanding services to our students, we can increase the momentum my predecessor, Dr. Charles F. Mullen, worked so hard and effectively to build.

Today we are especially sensitive to student needs, including the cost of education. The financial burden our students carry is remarkable, and I think alleviating this burden is their greatest need. Toward this end, we froze tuition for the past four years.

Now we need our alumni's assistance to help control students' increasing debt levels. One way you can help is by supporting our Student Scholarship Fund. One hundred percent of this gift goes directly to student scholarships. I can assure you my administration is committed to being a good steward of these valuable resources.

Our students deserve your help. Another recent initiative we have taken has been to make our classes more competitive. We have lowered the number of students accepted into the entering class, going from an average of 174 entering students to 149 in 2002. ICO is the only optometry school in the nation to take such action.

I hope our alumni will feel increasing pride for this institution and, in the future, I will continue to share news that may help you do so. We could lament the problems of ICO's past, but I choose to focus on the present, the future, the hope and excitement about the profession of optometry that I see in our students' eyes and their aspirations every day.

I encourage you to speak with young people about some of the great career opportunities in optometry. The College is a different place now than it was 10 years ago. I hope you will continue to recommend ICO, and support us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Arol Augsburger".

Arol Augsburger, OD

## Letters to the Editor

It was indeed a pleasure to see Arol Augsburger serving as ICO President when I received my copy of ICO Matters. I am sure our profession and our school will be well represented in the community. I am pleased to join many others in offering congratulations.

Yours truly,  
Gerald M. Thomas, OD '49  
Athens, Ga.

I just received my copy of ICO Matters and wanted to thank you for mentioning my assistance as a Recruitment Ambassador. What a surprise to me and yet it was the least I could do for my profession and all the good people who helped me while I was at ICO.

In a world that is constantly changing and sometimes moving too fast, I am glad to know that people like [Director of Placement] Lynn Petrica are still at ICO working to help the future ODs of our profession. She should be acknowledged too!

Best regards,  
Yvonne Kwapis, OD '91  
Toledo, Ohio

## ICO Matters

**President**  
Arol Augsburger, OD

**Vice President for Institutional Advancement**  
Anthony A. D'Andrea

**Director of Annual Giving**  
Felicia Filbin

**Director of Alumni Relations**  
Vincent W. Brandy, OD '90

**Editor**  
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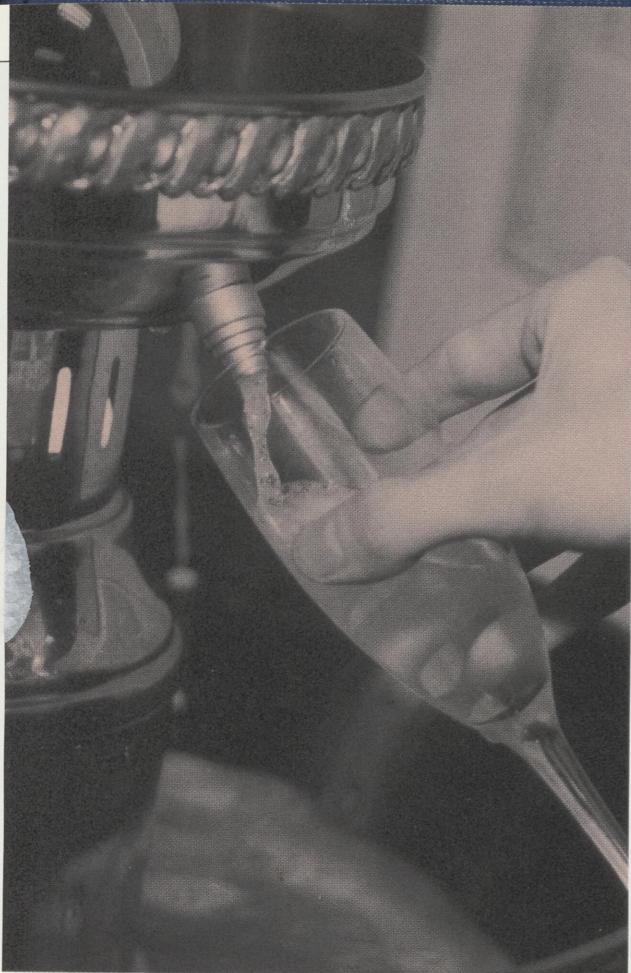
*Cover: Illinois College of Optometry students (clockwise, from left)  
Jason Blowe, Samantha Hair and Cerella Wade*

**www.ico.edu**



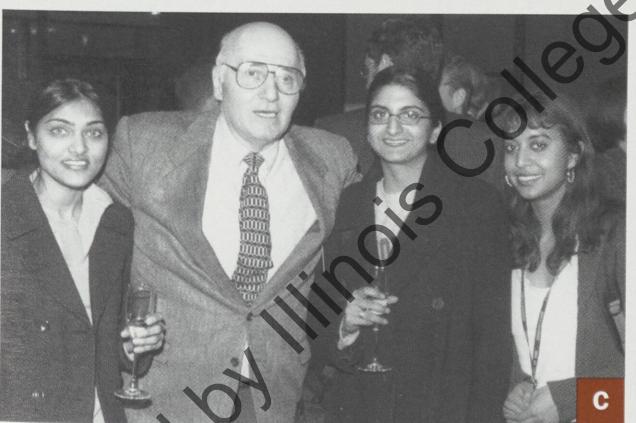
# Inauguration

The Illinois College of Optometry officially welcomed its fifth President, Dr. Arol Augsburger, and his wife, Stephanie, with a celebratory inauguration on March 7, 2002. A virtual ceremony, where visitors can hear Dr. Augsburger's inaugural message, is available via ICO's website: <http://www.ico.edu/ico2/neweve/presidentmsg.html>. Photos from Dr. Augsburger's inaugural reception can be viewed at: <http://www.ico.edu/ico2/neweve/inaug.html>.



**D**

- A. Arol and Stephanie Augsburger (opposite)
- B. From left: Valerie Kattouf, OD '95; Janice Scharre, OD '76, Dean of Academic Affairs; and Jacqueline Kattouf
- C. From left: Students Khyati Madi, Sofiya Alibhai and Ruby Nich Lavose with Information Clerk Anthony J. Barone
- D. From left: Student Deana LaBrosse; Trustee Millicent Knight, OD '87; Louise Sclafani, OD; and student Samantha Hair
- E. Arol Augsburger, OD, and Chairman of the Board Tom Lawless, OD '71





F



G



F. Trustee Richard Kattouf, OD '72, and former ICO President Al Rosenbloom, OD

G. Laura Rounce, Vice President for Human Resources and Operations, and Mark Colip, OD '92, Dean for Student Affairs

H. Chairman of the Board Tom Lawless, OD '71, presents the ICO mace to Dr. Augsburger.

I. Dr. Arol Augsburger

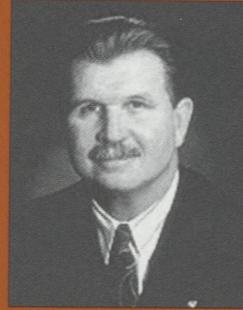


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**Illinois College of Optometry  
is proud to present the  
Annual Alumni  
Association Awards**

**With  
Special Guest  
Mike Ditka**

- All-American at the University of Pittsburgh
- NFL Rookie of the Year
- All-Pro
- Super Bowl Champion
- Coach of the Year
- NFL Hall of Fame



**Saturday, November 8, 2003**  
4:00 P.M. Alumni Cocktail reception in the Carl F. Shepard Library  
5:15 P.M. Alumni Awards Presentation in the Lecture Center Room 1200  
6:00 P.M. Mike Ditka

**Sunday, November 9, 2003**  
Four Hours of Continuing Education featuring ICO Alumnus, Jim Corgan, OD '83

For more information about the weekend, please contact Vince Brandys, OD '90, at 312-949-7079 or [vbrandys@ico.edu](mailto:vbrandys@ico.edu). The Alumni Reunion weekend is made possible by a generous educational grant from Alcon Laboratories.

**BOTH EVENTS ARE COMPLIMENTARY  
TO ALUMNI & SPOUSES.**

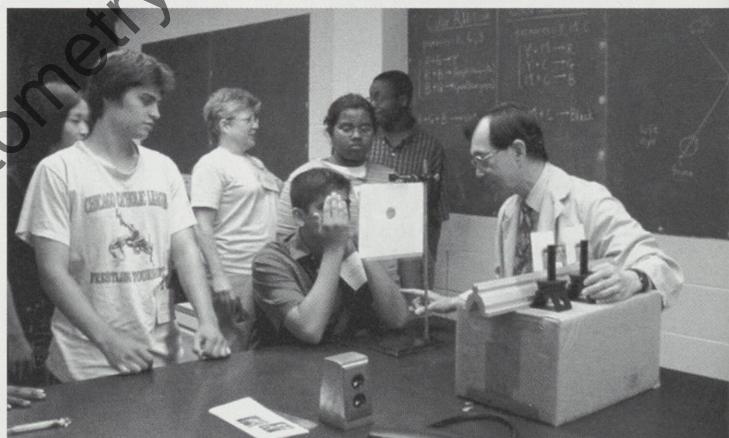
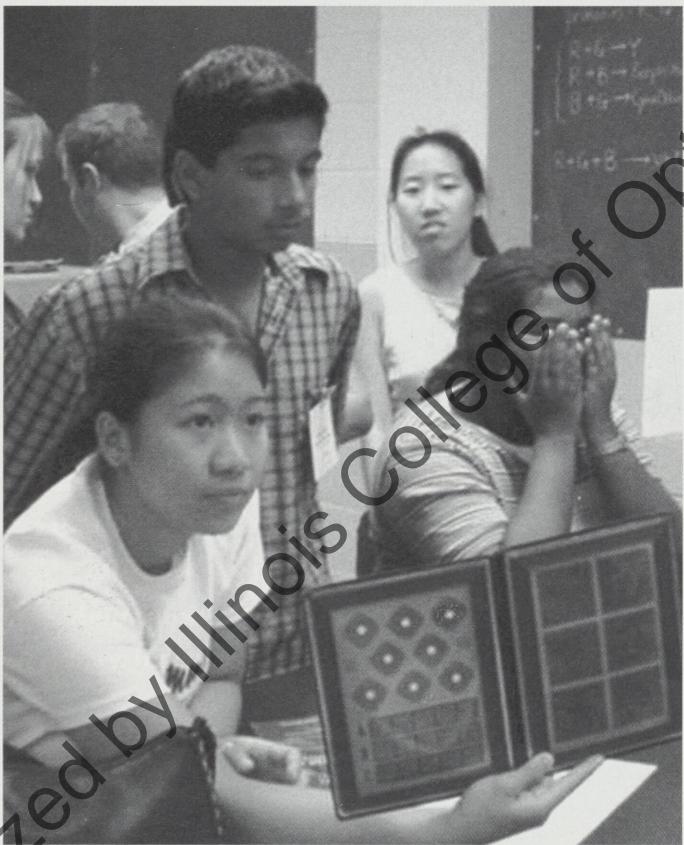
## Special Guests

Two events on March 14th brought government leaders to the Illinois College of Optometry.



"The Future of Healthcare in America and How It Impacts Private Practice," a panel discussion sponsored by ICO's Private Practice Club, featured (from right) Arkansas Congressman John Boozman, OD; Steve Leon, OD '80, President of the Illinois Optometric Association; and Noel Brazil, Director of the American Optometric Association's Political Action Committee.

Separately, as part of ICO's ongoing community outreach efforts, the Illinois Eye Institute hosted a reception to welcome incoming Illinois State Sen. Mattie Hunter (D). Sen. Hunter succeeds Sen. Margaret Smith, who retired for health reasons. ♦



## Career Day

Local high school students get a good look at optometry during Optometry Career Day. Held throughout the summer, the events provide opportunities for teens to spend time with ICO students, tour the College, and explore optometry-related activities. They may also visit the lab of David Lee, OD, PhD, where they learn about topics in the field ranging from color and binocular vision to depth perception. ♦

# Winning All Around

ICO's new Admissions CD-ROM package won awards in all three categories entered in the 18th Annual Admissions Advertising Awards Competition.

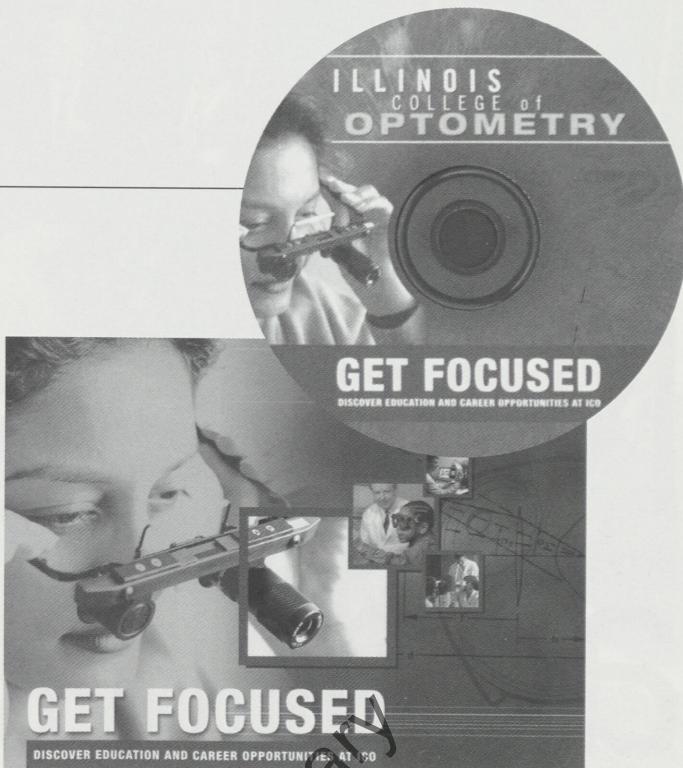
This national competition acknowledges the field of admissions marketing and advertising by recognizing creativity, marketing execution and message impact.

The admissions CD-ROM package won in the following categories:

Direct Mail (Silver Award – 2nd place nationally)

Video Viewbook (Merit Award – 4th place nationally)

Total Recruitment Package (Merit Award – 7th place nationally) ♦



# Practice Opportunity Symposium

The 6th annual Practice Opportunities Symposium, held in February, brought ICO alumni and practice consultants to campus to discuss "Optometric Practice Transitions." Topics included buying, selling and leasing a practice, buying into a practice and employment agreements.

An opportunities fair and reception capped off the event, which drew more than 300 students and alumni. It was sponsored by the Office of Student Affairs and ICO Placement Program. ♦

## ReFi means more than refinancing your house

Alumni with outstanding student loans can benefit from low interest rates through a student loan consolidation plan.

ICO's Student Financial Services Office can help you learn how to benefit from tremendous savings and other advantages.

Call Ron Campbell or Bryant Anderson at (312) 949-7441 for more information.

# World View

*The Multicultural Association celebrates diversity*

Every year on a Friday night in early spring, the academic environs of the Illinois College of Optometry become a burgeoning international showplace, with ethnic cuisine, beer, games, music and a spectacle of live performers scattered throughout the building.

The event, International Night, is sponsored by the Multicultural Association. Now in its fourth year, the evening involves more than 60 ICO students, and draws a crowd of members of the community and their guests.

The headline of the evening is a talent show featuring an array of entertainment, including men and women in vivid costumes presenting dance from their ancestral lands; songwriters and piano-players contributing contemporary and classical tunes from around the world; and a fashion show of native dress with models representing Serbia, Hungary, India, the Netherlands, Ukraine and North Korea. It is a celebration of multicultural goodwill and of ICO's diverse population. ♦

# Now and Then

In 1969, alumni C. Clayton Powell, CCO '52, and John Howlette, CCO '51, founded the National Optometric Association, a professional organization for minorities. This year, as the NOA marks its 34th year, the question becomes: Why aren't there more African-American students at ICO?



Diversity on ICO's campus reaches back more than 50 years to the days before the Northern Illinois College of Optometry (NICO) and the Chicago College of Optometry (CCO) merged to form the Illinois College of Optometry in 1955. At one time, says 1952 CCO graduate C. Clayton Powell, NICO and CCO had some of the largest populations of African-American students enrolled in optometry schools. The numbers may not have been huge, but there was a presence.

There's still an African-American presence on ICO's campus, and it still is not huge. In fact, blacks make up 3 percent of the College's student population, which is less than it was 50 years ago.

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### C. Clayton Powell, CCO '52



Powell deliberately chose to go to NICO because of its African-American population. But in 1949, the year he was admitted, NICO lost

its accreditation. Powell attended CCO instead and he says he couldn't have been happier.

Those were progressive days for African-Americans. The civil rights era was just taking root. Atlanta, Powell's hometown, was "the Mecca of the United States" for African-Americans, he says. He went to college with Martin Luther King, Jr., at Morehouse. When he arrived in Chicago in 1949,

Powell was a smart young black man determined to achieve his goals and change the world.

He did that, too. One of the first African American optometrists in Atlanta, Powell immediately began mixing practice and politics. By 1956 he was elected vice president of the Atlanta Branch of the NAACP. He married an attorney who went on to become the first black judge of record in the state of Georgia. He worked with the Atlanta Negro Voters League and to desegregate public schools.

Powell also became a leader in the optometric community. He was the first African-American member of the Georgia Optometric Association. In 1969, he and fellow CCO graduate

John Howlette, OD '51, founded the National Optometric Association, a professional organization for black and minority optometrists with minority recruitment, eliminating segregation and gaining strength in the American Optometric Association as its primary mission.

According to Mike Howlette, John's son and a 1975 graduate of ICO, the Powell/Howlette combination was like a one-two punch. "They got things done."

And they made a difference. "My father was a trailblazer," Mike says. "He opened doors. He created an example of being different. It was easier for me because of him."

John, who passed away last fall (see

## Jason Blowe

**Year:** Second

**Home:** Natchez, Miss.

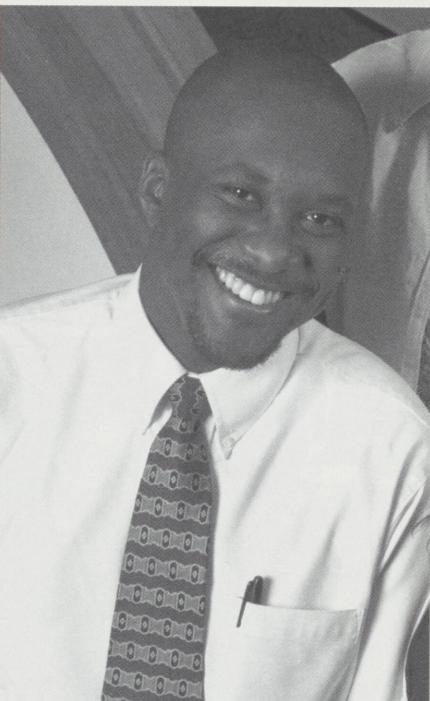
**Undergraduate School:** University of Southern Mississippi

Jason Blowe has been interested in optometry since high school, when he dissected his first eye. "I was fascinated," he says.

As a result, Blowe got a job at an optical shop while in college. After he graduated, he continued to learn the business of optometry while working at Eye Masters, a division of Eye Care Centers of America, for four years before coming to the Illinois College of Optometry.

"All of us at ICO have a desire to help people," Blowe says. "Otherwise we wouldn't have chosen this field. I want to recruit a lot of students, to let them know about this kind of opportunity."

"We have to remind ourselves that we are the future leaders of our communities."



story on page 12), had been the first black optometrist in Richmond, Va. He was also active in the Richmond Crusade for Voters and the Richmond Housing Authority. Progressive in every sense, John was noted in Richmond, Mike says, for selling unique styles of designer frames. "When Diane von Furstenberg put some style to frames in the mid-70s, they became a fashion statement as well as a medical device," Mike recalls. "My father was always stylish and he got the most cutting edge stuff. People said he not only made folks see good, he helped folks look good."

### Mike Howlette, ICO '75



When Mike finished optometry school in 1975, he joined his father's practice and supported his politics. "I was active along with him," Mike says, "and we got all kinds of things started. As chairman of research for the Richmond Crusade for Voters, my father was instrumental in electing the state's first black mayor, the commonwealth attorney, the sheriff, police chief, fire

chief...ultimately the first black governor in U.S. history, L. Douglas Wilder. A black optometrist my father recruited from Richmond, Benjamin J. Lambert, is the only optometrist to be elected to the Senate."

When he was at ICO in the early 70s, Mike says, "People basically accepted you. There were a lot of things going on for activists. Some people were doing their own thing, but you just stuck with the ones who accepted you and allowed you to participate in what was going on. I'm still very good friends with people I know from ICO."

Still, he says, "it was kind of lonely because there were only three African-Americans there my first year: Joe McCray, Hank Moore and me. The school itself had no way to help us assimilate. It's hard to believe that with the thousands of black patients annually seen at the Illinois Eye Institute, qualified potential students were so hard to find."

When he needed support, Mike Howlette found it in the community of African-American optometrists. "Hank's father, Dr. Henry Moore, NICO '46, and Dr. Robert Johnson, NICO '69,

gave me a job doing vision therapy while I was in school. That was excellent experience," he recalls. "And before he started his own practice, Dr. Bill Morton worked with them too. He and my father went to school together. Bill and his wife Mable made me feel at home. I'd known them all my life."

C. Clayton Powell says he also found encouragement and support when he needed it. As a high school student out on his own, Powell worked as a janitor in an optician's office in Atlanta. When Dr. H. E. Welton, the first black graduate of Ohio State School of Optometry and now a significant supporter of that institution, joined the group, Powell met his first African-American optometrist. Welton became his role model.

"I watched Dr. Welton," Powell says. "I saw his clean white coat and his work and the shiny new instruments, and I decided it looked pretty good."

"I began talking to Dr. Welton about becoming an optometrist and quite naturally he took an interest," says Powell. "So I made the decision when I was a senior in high school that I was going to be an optometrist."

When Powell arrived in Chicago

and found the doors of NICO shuttered, he was referred to CCO, where Dr. Morton Abrams was president.

"Dr. Abrams was really my mentor," Powell says. "He and Dr. Leo Manas, Dr. Eugene Freeman, and a black member of the faculty, Dr. Broadnax, were there when I had problems and wanted to talk."

By the time Powell graduated, Abrams was paying him \$50 a month to edit the school newspaper, *Eyes Right*. He graduated Beta Sigma Kappa and was ranked number three in the Tomb & Key Honor Society, an organization for students who have demonstrated scholastic achievement and college leadership. In 1986, ICO awarded Powell the degree of Doctor of Science in Optometry, and in 2001, along with Howlette, Powell was named to the National Optometric Hall of Fame.

When Powell went back to Atlanta to practice, Abrams encouraged him to visit schools in the South to recruit more students. In 1954, Powell organized a speaking tour for Abrams of Morehouse, Clark College and Morris Brown College.

Recruiting minorities has been a mission of Powell's ever since. He believes part of the reason the number of black students is so low now is that today's generation isn't militant enough. In his day, he "put pressure on all the deans of the schools of optometry. I'd use my own money to go and talk to the deans and tell them that they needed to recruit more minorities." Dr. Powell also admits some thought he was "too hard."

Others, though, agree that intensive recruiting is the only way to increase the number of African-American students in optometry. Mike Howlette says, "Initially the line was that there weren't qualified applicants, so the NOA was established to find qualified candidates. My father recruited 37 students by himself. But the schools have to do something too."

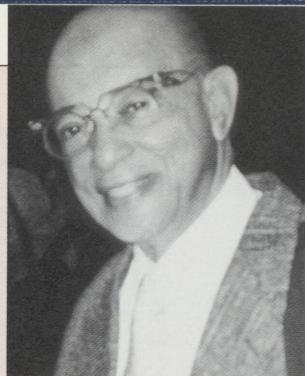
#### **Millicent Knight, ICO '87**



At ICO, minority recruiting has been on the mind of Mark Colip, OD '92 and Dean for Student Affairs, since he took over admissions in 1993. "When I first came in, I looked at the numbers and I wondered if something was going on," Colip says. "Were people being deliberately left out? Were they being denied access? My first priority was to make sure there weren't any barriers to access. I'm 100 percent convinced that there are none now."

When he began his tenure, Colip also had a conversation with Millicent Knight, OD '87, and now a member of ICO's Board of Trustees (see story on p. 15). Knight is truthful about the fact that her experience at ICO in the 1980s was difficult and debilitating.

"Not only were the minority students unhappy when I was there," Knight says, "the majority of students were unhappy. It wasn't a place where you felt nurtured or where you felt you could



## **John L. Howlette, Sr.**

John L. Howlette, Sr., CCO '51 died on October 9, 2002, in Richmond, Va. He was 75.

Born in 1927 in Richmond, Howlette attended Virginia Union University until he was drafted into the U.S. Army. After serving in the military, he completed undergraduate studies at Howard University.

As the first African-American optometrist licensed in Richmond — and only the second in the state — Howlette was a pioneer. His efforts to deliver services to black patients in segregationist Richmond both served the local community and helped open the field of optometry to black students nationwide. To counter the lack of access both to eye care for patients and professional development for practitioners, in 1969 he helped found the National Optometric Association (NOA), an organization with 500 members today. Howlette is credited with mentoring 37 minority optometrists into the profession, including six from his own family. His son, Mike, graduated from ICO in 1975. Denied membership in the Richmond Optometric Society and the Virginia Optometric Association, Howlette eventually became president of both organizations. He was awarded a Doctor Of Science in Optometry degree from ICO in 1977, and in 1993 he was elected chairman of the Virginia State Board of Optometry. In 2001, along with C. Clayton Powell, Howlette was named to the National Optometric Hall of Fame. He is the first Virginia optometrist to have that honor.

Howlette also served the Richmond community through board membership on, among others, the Richmond School Board, the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority, the Black History Museum and Cultural Center of Virginia, the Virginia State College Foundation, and Commonwealth Bank. He is survived by his wife of 56 years, Fay, a daughter and three sons, nine grandchildren, a great grandchild, four sisters, and a brother.

## Cerella Wade

**Year:** First

**Home:** New Orleans, La.

**Undergraduate School:** Xavier University

When she was in middle school, Cerella Wade went to an all-girls school. The benefit, she says, was that "we weren't overshadowed by boys. We were really encouraged to be all we could be."

Wade took that message to heart. Her email address is *carpe diem*, Latin for "seize the day." At ICO she volunteers to meet prospective students and participates in the Private Practice Club and the National Optometric Student Association.

It was the personal touch at ICO that persuaded her to choose it. "My interview at ICO was disappointing," Wade explains. "But at the end of the day, I met an African-American student, Samantha Hair, who could talk with me about it. We talked for more than an hour and I got her take on things. She called me later to follow up. She influenced my decision to come to ICO."



trust people. There was a lot of stress and I think the administration wasn't really all on the same page."

As a result, getting through the program for everyone at ICO took enormous individual motivation and perseverance. For Knight and the other minorities, it also took courage.

"There was a lot of intimidation at the school," she says. "It was a somewhat hostile environment. Some of the professors didn't seem to believe that the African-American and other minority students could or should attain the same level of professional degree that they held."

In Knight's first year, an admissions counselor told her he didn't think she could get through the program. "He said he thought I was wasting my money," she recalls. "I think in his own way, he thought he was trying to help me. And he did because I stopped for one moment and I thought, 'This man doesn't even know me. How can he tell me what I have the capability of doing and what I can't?' At that moment I decided that I absolutely was going to finish the program."

It wasn't easy. During Knight's first year, she became ill, and was rushed to

the hospital. "It was the day before final exams, and I went to one of my professors to tell him I was ill. He indicated that I should take the exam alone with him. I was afraid, so I walked into the final exam, signed my name on the test, and turned it in — I was too ill to do anything else. I decided to take an F, rather than be isolated from the rest of the class.

"Many of the black alumni had warned me that the school environment would not be receptive to us," Knight continues. "They said, 'Watch your back; don't let the faculty isolate you.' That caused tremendous internal stress. Even the non-professional staff harassed us. We were routinely stopped and asked to show our IDs. It was insulting and humiliating to be singled out that way."

Knight made it through the program, working double time to make up for her illness and to take advantage of all opportunities. She found support among her peers, faculty members who reached out to her, and NOA members such as Dr. Robert Johnson and Dr. Donald E. Lawson, a prominent African-American optometrist. Knight worked for throughout opto-

metry school.

Knight's family was also there for her.

"My mother has a master's degree and went through a similar experience in graduate school," Knight explains. "She advised me to stay focused on my vision. My father's mantra was 'be a leader.' My uncle and mentor, Congressman Bennie Thompson of Mississippi, stressed and demonstrated courage. They helped me meet the challenges and encouraged me to participate in school activities.

"Then, during my last year," Knight says, "we had a surge of new faculty. Some were fresh out of residency. They were tough, but fair. They didn't seem to have pre-conceived notions about the abilities of the minority students. A high point for me was being selected that same year by the faculty and the Council on Ethics as the 'Most Professional Clinician.'"

As she sees it now, "For minorities, the biggest part of any professional school is being able to deal with the environment. Along with dealing with the academics, which are rigorous, and dealing with growing up at the same time, it really becomes a matter of who

has the most mental toughness. I don't think I was any smarter than the other black students who were in my class, but I was very determined."

After she graduated, Knight served in the State Board of Optometry's Department of Professional Regulations. She became active in the push for passage of an Illinois legislative bill permitting optometrists to use therapeutic pharmaceutical agents in their practices. Through that, Knight got to know Tom Lawless, OD '71, and current Chairman of the ICO Board of Trustees. It was Lawless who recruited Knight to the Board in 1997.

She recalls being apprehensive at first. "I can remember driving in my car and crying," Knight says. "It was a tug of war decision for me. I felt that if, on the one hand, I agreed to be on the Board, other black graduates would feel like I was turning my back on the experience we had there. I also had to deal with my own pain and anger."

"Ultimately," says Knight, "I decided the best way to try to bring some peace and resolution was to try to ensure that no one else went through

our experience. And the only way I could do that was to be actively involved myself."

Today, Knight says, "I have grown to love the school. I've watched the growing pains. And I really respect the fact that [the administration] has stepped up and made the necessary changes.

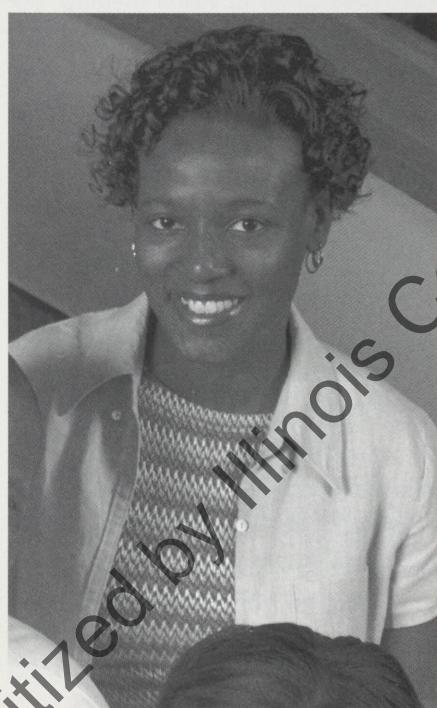
"When you look at things that have happened over the years, there are really ugly things. It's painful to talk about them and be reminded of the experience, but it's also painful to listen to them. The fact is someone had to sit down and listen. When we first started the conversations about support for ICO, I said the only way you're going to be able to generate support from the African-American alumni is to hear their stories and let them vent. There's a lot of anger. So people sat down — people like Dr. Colip and former President Dr. Mullen — and said OK, we really have to take this seriously and help people move forward. It was a healing process. There's definitely a different culture among the students at ICO than when I was there."



*Aisha Davis, Director of Admissions, meets with a prospective student.*

#### ICO '03

Current African-American students at ICO validate Knight's assertion. Samantha Hair, a third-year student, says she felt good about ICO when she interviewed for admission. "I was impressed with the school's facilities and



## Samantha Hair

**Year:** Third

**Home:** Fort Pierce, Fla.

**Undergraduate School:** Southern University

The fact that Samantha Hair has relatives in Chicago encouraged her to select the Illinois College of Optometry, but the major reason she came to Chicago was the funding she received from ICO's Scholarship for Under-Represented Populations. "That made a big difference," she says.

Originally from Fort Pierce, Fla., Hair says she had never seen a black female optometrist when she went to college in Baton Rouge, La. "I thought to myself, we need to do something," she says.

Part of Hair's effort toward that end is to head ICO's National Optometric Student Association, the student affiliate of the NOA.

"The major goal of NOSA is educating the community about their vision and increasing the number of minorities in optometry," Hair says.

staff," she says. "It seemed like everywhere I went people were friendly."

Second-year student Jason Blowe concurs. "Everyone has been supportive," he says. "Coming to ICO, I've had no major roadblocks. Being black doesn't cross my mind as I go about day-to-day. I feel comfortable."

Still, Blowe says, "Occasionally it can be a little lonely being one of two black males at ICO."

According to Aisha Davis, Director of Admissions at ICO, part of the problem is a relatively low number of African-American applicants. She and the admissions team make more than 100 recruiting visits each year, but she's

not seeing a high level of response from blacks. As a result, Davis has begun to recruit African-Americans at earlier ages. She developed a special career day at ICO for high school students (see story on p. 7).

Davis also works with current ICO students who serve as "ambassadors" for their communities and volunteers when prospective students visit the campus.

"If prospective minority students don't see current students who look like them when they come to campus, they may assume there are none. They may get the impression that they wouldn't feel comfortable at ICO — whether they actually will or won't,"

Davis says. "One thing we've done to address that is to get a more diverse group of current students involved in recruitment. We've set aside time for current students to have lunch with applicants on Interview Day so they can talk about their experiences at ICO. That sounds really simple, but having a diverse group of current students interacting with prospective students helps show what it's like to be a student here."

And the current students love it. There was so much interest in contributing to Interview Day, Davis had to turn people away. "They volunteer because they want to be involved," she says.

# Always an Activist

After 10 years as a practitioner, Millicent Knight, ICO '87, joined the Board of Trustees of the College in 1997. In 2002 she established an African-American scholarship endowment and a private practice endowment.

"I've always been active in what I believe in," she says.

Millicent Knight is alone in her office on a rainy Friday afternoon. She's working on an audit for the insurance company, trying to get her paperwork in the mail by the end of the day.

She seems slightly antagonized by the exercise. "I [went into optometry] because I enjoy taking care of people," she explains. "I like doing it my way. I don't like some insurance company telling me what to do."

Knight, OD '87, has always blazed her own trail. As a six-year old child she decided to become an optometrist after visiting the Illinois Eye Institute.

"Every week I would have to go to vision therapy," she recalls. "The people there were so caring and helpful, I thought that's what I want to do." Then, when Knight was in college at Augustana, Dr. R. Tracy Williams, then a student intern at the Eye Institute, volunteered to take her to the ICO admissions office to help her get started.

Among other things while she was a student at ICO, Knight formed a co-ed basketball team. "We gave the other teams a run for their money," she says. "The whole league played better that year because nobody wanted to lose to a team that had girls on it. It was fun! Even the worst team played better that year ...which was the faculty, I think."

Knight says she's a born competitor and she's learned a lot from sports. "There were very few girls on my street when I was growing up, so I played a lot of sports with guys," she says. "I like competing against myself. I was a sprinter in college. With that you're not really running against anyone else, you're running against yourself. But you are still part of a team. I think it's really important for women to be involved in

Indeed, involvement in the community is a common thread among ICO's African-American students. "Just our presence makes a difference," Blowe says. "It helps just to be visible, to be a familiar face for those looking for one."

But Blowe also notes the responsibility he feels to be more than just a face. "We have a lot to do in terms of letting people know this is an option," says Blowe. "There's been a lot of progress in the past 50 years, but we have to make more strides. There are definitely more opportunities for blacks, but we have to let people know the opportunities are out there."

Cerella Wade, a first-year student,

places the onus of that responsibility firmly on the shoulders of the students. "It's left to the minorities to make our experience better and to get more minorities to come here," she says. "The faculty are there to help. ICO has done its part; we have to do ours."

In keeping with that, Davis and the African-American students at ICO rallied to re-establish a chapter of the National Optometric Student Association (NOSA). Samantha Hair has been elected president for next year and her goal is to help increase the numbers of African-Americans in optometry.

Says Wade, "I would like NOSA to be successful in recruiting more African-

Americans; it's disappointing that there are so few of us. I don't feel discriminated against, but people like to identify with people who are like them."

Millicent Knight is contributing to this effort by putting her money where her mouth is. She established the African-American Scholarship Endowment to support black students. She also mentors students interested in optometry. "It's time consuming," she says, "but a good investment in the future of optometry."

"I am optimistic," Knight concludes. "I think ICO has taken some progressive steps. It has become proactive and futuristic in its thinking." ♦

sports because it teaches you how to be competitive. It teaches you to have a strategy and it teaches you to let go of fear."

These are lessons Knight has found helpful throughout her life. She was one of only a handful of African-American students at ICO, where she had to fight for fair treatment not only because of her race but also because of her gender.

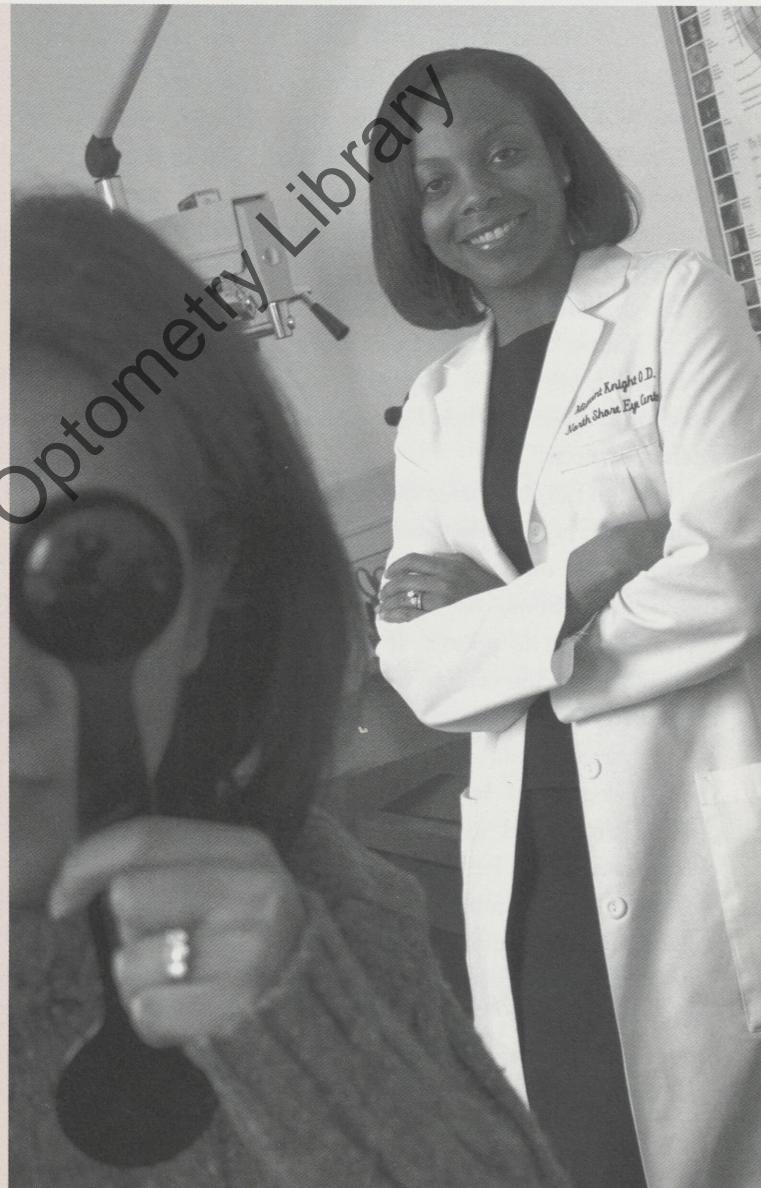
When she decided she wanted to buy her own practice, Knight quit her position with a group in Evanston, Ill., without having another job lined up. She spent five weeks creating a business plan and strategy for acquiring her own clinic.

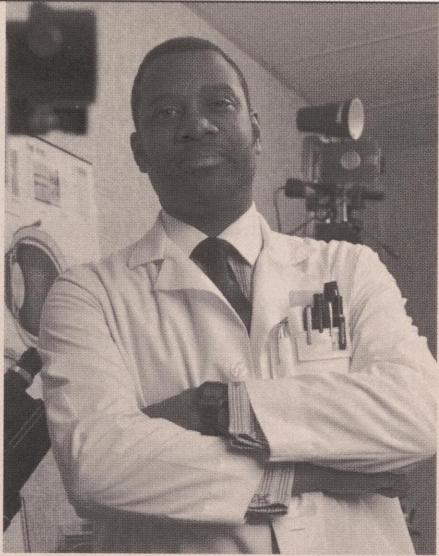
"You have to take some risks," she says. "I decided that I had different practice philosophies from the people I was working with and that I had to be true to my principles and the way I practice. I walked away."

"Five weeks after I left," she continues, "Dr. Leon Rondenet in Evanston asked me to buy his practice, which is now North Shore Eye Center. Until I took the risk and quit my job, I was working so many hours and doing volunteer work that I hadn't had time to decide what I really wanted to do. You can't get what you want if you're not clear about what it is. Once I had more clarity and wrote a business plan, everything fell into place."

Today, Knight has six employees: two associates, three full-time staff members and one part-time technician. Her group diagnoses and treats eye disease, fits contact lenses and provides general eye care.

"Our defining characteristic is quality of care," she says. ♦





# Student, Teacher

**Joe McCray made the grade when he was a student at ICO; today he's giving grades as a member of the faculty**

Things have changed at ICO since Joseph McCray, OD '75, was a first-year student in the early seventies. "Other than the janitorial staff, I was one of three African-Americans on campus," says McCray.

"I'd previously attended the University of Illinois Circle Campus and Kennedy King, where the student bodies were more diverse. When I got to ICO I felt very alone."

Though his classmates were curious at first, McCray says they were far more accepting and supportive than many of the faculty. "Some of my professors expected me to do poorly. If 30 questions were asked in class in the space of an hour, 15 of them would be directed at the three of us." McCray became used to instructors hovering over him during exams and expecting him to cheat. Rather than letting this discourage him, he channeled his energy toward succeeding in his studies. "I was not about to let them stop me from achieving my goals," McCray says.

Initially, McCray had intended to go to medical school, but a routine visit to ICO's clinic changed his mind. A

pre-med student at UIC at the time, McCray came to the clinic for a pair of contact lenses. Though he'd been coming to the clinic since childhood for vision care, something about this visit struck a chord. "I had a very positive experience and, for the first time, became interested in optometry as a profession," says McCray. Realizing that he'd been coming to ICO all his life and had never seen an African-American optometrist contributed to his final decision.

Soon McCray had pulled up stakes and was enrolled at ICO. "Though my classroom experiences were often frustrating and challenging, I received an excellent education," says McCray. His studies led him to focus on vision therapy, and he became especially interested in working with children who were experiencing visually-related learning difficulties. The high quality of scholarship at ICO, coupled with his desire to be an example for African-American students, led to McCray's decision to join the ICO faculty in 1980.

Since then McCray has been an outspoken advocate of diversity on

campus, a mentor to minority students, and an active member of the National Optometric Association (NOA), which was founded to meet the needs of minorities in optometry. McCray has also been active in promoting the student chapter of the NOA. He's a partner with the Plano Clinic, a group practice on Chicago's South Side founded by Robert Johnson, NICO '69, and Henry Moore, NICO '46. Today Bob's daughter Stephanie, ICO '78, works at Plano, and Henry's son, Hank, serves as a consultant.

While there were a handful of African-American students in this year's first-year class, McCray is still the only African-American faculty member at ICO. "Although it's heartbreaking that we haven't come farther," says McCray, "ICO is making important strides toward diversity." There are many more minorities in administrative positions on campus today, and the school is working harder to recruit African-American applicants to its program.

"Growing up, I never saw an African-American optometrist," says McCray. "I want African-American children today who come to our clinic to see doctors who look like them. I want these children to know that optometry is one choice, among many, that is open to them." ♦

— Chryssa Atkinson

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# At your service

## Student Association president Liz Chu makes a practice of service



Back in high school, Elizabeth Chu had to do a research project on a profession. She was interested in medicine; her godfather was a dentist. Chu chose to explore optometry for her assignment.

"I decided it was exactly what I wanted to do," the 26-year-old, third-year student says. "Optometry is the right kind of medicine for me to practice."

It works for Chu in part because optometry allows practitioners time to pursue other projects and hobbies in addition to the profession. And Chu has many interests.

Community service is one example. Chu has been a volunteer since her teens, when she was president of the All-girls Service Club. "I used to go with my godfather to his meetings and I saw the role he took organizing and with community service," she says. "I think it had a big influence on me, even if I didn't realize it at the time."

At ICO, Chu has also been service-minded. She was elected to be the first-year class representative and this year she was elected president of the Student Association.

"As class rep, I learned what it felt like to be the voice of the class," Chu says, "and it felt good. I realized you do have a voice and you can make a difference. I wanted to take that to the next level and represent more than the class; I wanted to represent the school."

When she ran for the office, Chu was clear about her agenda. "I'm happy with our school systems; I think the fac-

ulty-student relationship is great. Compared to other schools, we have so much at ICO," she says. "But I want to enhance what's already here. The ground is established. It's left up to us to make our experience the best it can be."

Chu believes the way to improve things is to speak out in unison. "We need to hear from people," she says. "It may seem like you can't make a difference, but it's numbers that speak."

As a minority at ICO, Chu would especially like to increase minority participation. "I want to encourage other minorities to serve," she says. "I'm proud to be a Chinese-American. I'm proud to be a female. I hope to serve as a role model."

However, Chu says when she ran for SA president, she wasn't thinking of herself as an Asian-American minority. "I didn't separate myself," she says. "I don't think I'm Chinese-American when I do things. I just think I'm getting things done."

Getting things done is Chu's primary goal not only for the benefit of others, but for the benefit to herself. "It makes me happy when I see what I can do," she says. "The feedback I get keeps me going. Not necessarily the thank-yous, but the smiles. They make me feel good."

Now Chu is focused on "trying to do anything to improve things for the students. ICO is going in a good direction. In so many little ways we're better than others. I'm very proud of my school," she says. "I'm always bragging." ♦

# Community Outreach

## Drs. Don and Camtu Nguyen reach out to others

In addition to the usual concerns faced by new students at the Illinois College of Optometry, Don and Camtu Nguyen arrived in 1994 with two challenges that were unique to their situation. One was that they were newlyweds and the other was that they were members of a relatively uncommon minority group: Vietnamese-Americans.

While optometry was on their minds on the way to Chicago from their native California, the couple was also distracted by another thought: marriage. They stopped to elope in Las Vegas. For the rest of their journey they wondered how they would fit into the ICO community as a married couple.

Don and Camtu credit Mark Colip, OD '92, then Director and now Dean of Student Affairs, for showing great sensitivity toward their situation. He assisted them with the admissions process, and was a "blessing" to their marriage, says Don. Colip made special arrangements to allow them to room together in Brady Hall, with the proviso that they behave and "keep the noise level down."

Then the Nguyens found a number of faculty mentors at ICO, including husband-and-wife teams. Drs. Stephanie and Leonard Messner, for example, were models of kindness and empathy on clinical rotations. The Nguyens also fondly recall Drs. Neil and Susan Gilmard, who prepared them for the



*From far right: Camtu with Keely, Don with Alyson, pictured with their apprentices (left).*

challenge of managing a practice. In fact, Don recalls a project for Gilmard's class where he and Camtu had to design a hypothetical practice to scale on a blueprint. Four years later, they were doing it for real. The Nguyens recently opened their third office in Las Vegas.

Children of families that came to this country after the fall of Saigon in 1975, the Nguyens grew up on the West Coast. They attended the University of California-Irvine, where they were part of large and diverse Asian communities. When they arrived at ICO, they were a bit surprised by the predominantly white profile of their classmates.

Yet one of the reasons the Nguyens chose to attend ICO, Don says, was to "experience life away from home and to grow in the challenge of the journey." In fact, coming to Chicago exposed them to a range of ethnic groups they were unfamiliar with while living in California.

After graduation from ICO in 1998, Don and Camtu headed west to begin their practice. There they followed the example of Dr. Charles Luu, a prominent optometrist in the "Little Saigon"

community of Westminster, Calif. He had also established a practice in partnership with his wife. It was Dr. Luu who showed Don and Camtu that a strong marriage and family values are key to establishing professional and financial independence. But strong family support has been a constant in the Nguyens' lives. "Our greatest mentors were our parents and siblings who invested in our education," Camtu says. "Their sacrifices made our schooling possible."

Today, in addition to nurturing a growing business and family, the Nguyens make community service a priority. For example, one of their commitments is to sponsor members of addiction programs.

Within in their profession, the Nguyens mentor optician apprentices from a community college. So far two of their apprentices have gone on to attend optometry school.

But it isn't only the students who benefit when the Nguyens help out. Because of the mentorship program, Don went back to school to study for the National Board exam for opticianry. He passed in May, becoming the first optometrist to be dual licensed in the state of Nevada for optometry and opticianry.

"My philosophy is simple: You can't teach what you haven't gone through," says Don. "I hope to be able to teach at the college soon and maybe work as an optician on the side."

His greatest lesson: "By mentoring someone else, you are truly helping yourself." ♦

— Dave Mulcahey

# Obituaries

## Paul E. Borton

Paul E. Borton OD, NICO '50, died on February 27, 1997, in Gulf Breeze, Fla. He was 69.

Born in 1927 in Bryan, Iowa, Borton graduated from Hillsdale College and the Illinois College of Optometry. He also served in the U.S. Navy. A resident of Muskegon, Mich., Dr. Borton was a past president of the Michigan and West Michigan Optometric Association, served as a consultant to Michigan College of Optometry at Ferris State University, and served two terms on the Optometric State Board of Examiners. He was a member of the Central United Methodist Church, Muskegon Elks, Muskegon Country Club, Westshore Jazz Society, and was a former Barbershopper. Dr. Borton is survived by three daughters, a son, and five grandchildren.

## Donald J. Hallas

Donald J. Hallas, OD '64, died on November 5, 2002, in St. Petersburg, Fla. He was 74.

Born in Sharon Hill, Pa., Hallas moved to St. Petersburg in 1955. Dr. Hallas was a graduate of Albright College and the Illinois College of Optometry. He served in the U.S. Navy during the Korean War, retiring as commander. In practice for more than 38 years, Dr. Hallas worked most recently for the Suncoast Eye Clinic. He also worked with the Lions Club for 15 years, performing eye exams for the needy. A member of the Awesome Original Second Time Arounders Marching Band, Dr. Hallas was a past president of the St. Petersburg Little Theater and the Breakfast Sertoma. He was also a member of St. Thomas Episcopal Church, serving as Eucharistic minister and choirist. Dr. Hallas is survived by his wife of 46 years, Martha, a daughter, a son, and a sister.

## Gerald Hewitt

Gerald Hewitt, CCO '55, died on January 28, 2003, in Orland Park, Ill. He was 77.

Born in 1925 in Jackson, Mich., Dr. Hewitt attended Jackson Community College, Wayne State University, the Chicago College of Optometry, and Columbia International University. From 1959 to 1974, he was in practice at the SIM/ECWA Eye Hospital in Nigeria, West Africa. He then taught at the newly-established School of Optometry at the

## Keeping an Eye On Alumni

University of Benin in Benin City, Nigeria. Upon returning to the U.S. in 1981, Dr. Hewitt went into practice with Cole National and Pearle Vision in Orland Park, Ill. He was a member of the Fellowship of Christian Optometrists. Dr. Hewitt is survived by his wife, Mildred, two sons and two daughters, four grandchildren, and a brother.

## Adalbert Kaminski

Adalbert Kaminski, OD, NICO '45, died on April 22, 2003, in Bellevue, Wash. He was 70.

Born in 1933 in Berlin, Germany, Dr. Kaminski emigrated to the United States in 1938. He graduated from the Northern Illinois College of Optometry. Dr. Kaminski was the first optometrist on staff with the Group Health Cooperative in Seattle, where he promoted the inclusion of optometry in interdisciplinary practice. The Cooperative presents a "Spirit of Kaminski" award to their Optometrist of the Year honoree. Dr. Kaminski was a founder and long-time director of the Group Health Credit Union in Seattle. Preceded in death by his wife of 51 years, Margaret, he is survived by two sons, two daughters, eight grandchildren, a great grandchild, and a sister.

## Gustav J. Knotek

Gustav J. Knotek, OD '49, died on May 4, 2003, in Hayward, Wisc. He was 81.

Dr. Knotek was born in 1922 in Chicago. He served in the U.S. Navy and Army Air Corps as a pilot during World War II and graduated from the Illinois College of Optometry in 1949. He established a private practice in Aurora, Ill. and continued there for 36 years. He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Loretta, a daughter, two grandchildren, and a brother.

## E. Ervin Musk

E. Ervin Musk, OD, CCO '50, died on November 11, 2002, in Des Moines, Iowa. He was 77.

Born in Fulton, Ill. in 1925, Dr. Musk graduated from the Illinois College of Optometry and served in the Army during World War II. Most of his 49 years of practice was spent in partnership with his brother, Leonard Musk, OD, CCO '50. He was a member of the American Legion, the American Optometric Association, the Fulton Chamber of

## Obituaries

Commerce, and the Fulton Lions Club. He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Lorraine, three daughters, four grandchildren, two step-grandchildren, and a great grandson.

### Leonard V. Musk

Leonard V. Musk, OD, CCO '50, died on March 14, 2002, in Clinton, Iowa. He was 73.

Dr. Musk was born in 1928 in Fulton, Ill. He attended Wartburg College and graduated from the Chicago College of Optometry. He was an optometrist in private practice for 38 years in Fulton with his brother, Ervin Musk, OD, CCO '50. A 50-year member of the American Optometric Association, Dr. Musk also served as a deacon at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Clinton, Iowa. He is survived by his wife of 50 years, Lavonne, a daughter, a son, and three grandchildren.

### Glenn M. Peck

Glenn M. Peck, OD '36, died February 17, 2003, in Fort Madison, Iowa. He was 87.

Born in Detroit, Mich. in 1915, Peck graduated from the Northern Illinois College of Optometry. In private practice for 67 years, Dr. Peck saw his last patient one month before his death. He was a member of the Iowa Optometric Association and the American Optometric Association. He was a 32nd degree Mason and a 58-year member of Claypoole Masonic Lodge No. 13 in Davenport, Iowa. In addition, he was a member of the Elks Lodge, the Lions Club, the Wesleyan Club, and First United Methodist Church in Fort Madison. Dr. Peck is survived by his wife of 65 years, Martha OD, NICO '36, a daughter, a son, three grandsons, and one great grandson.

## Class Notes

### 1980

Ron Roelfs has been named an Education Trustee to the Heart of America Contact Lens Society, a professional association that provides education in primary care optometry and the contact lens specialty through their annual Congress. Dr. Roelfs resides in Waverly, Iowa.

### 1981

Lt. Col. Robert P. Nyre, commander of the North Dakota Army National Guard Medical Detachment, was recently promoted to the rank of colonel. In addition to performing his military duties, Col. Nyre practices optometry in Minot, ND.

### 1994

Stephanie Staatz and her husband, Scott, OD '97, announced the birth of their daughter, Rylee Elizabeth, in October. They also have a son, Mason. The Staatzes practice in Cameron, Mo.

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For more information, please contact Anthony A. D'Andrea at (312) 949-7070.

# Giving

## Alumnus establishes scholarship

Irwin Azman, ICO '77, has made a \$30,000 pledge to establish the Azman Scholarship for Excellence in Contact Lens/ Private Practice. The gift, made in honor of Dr. Azman's father, Abraham Azman (1918-1994), will provide financial support to third-year students who want to specialize in contact lenses while in private practice.

"I am honored to make this contribution to the College because I strongly believe in the importance of the contact lens specialty," said Dr. Azman. "Extraordinary patient care and patient satisfaction is what all optometrists should strive for in providing the very best service to patients. My hope is this scholarship will encourage students to strive to be their very best."

Since 2000, Dr. Azman has served as a faculty member at the University of Maryland's School of Medicine in Baltimore and as director of the university's Maryland Center of Eye Care Contact Lens Service. Originally from Baltimore, Dr. Azman has owned his private practice in Timonium, Md., with his brother, Dr. Thomas Azman, for more than 25 years. Ninety percent of their patients wear contact lenses. ♦

## The Lions raise hope for Illinois children with low vision

The Lions of Illinois Foundation recently increased to \$25,000 per year its grant supporting low vision services at the Illinois School for Visually Impaired. ISVI is a residential school in Jacksonville, Ill.

"The Lions of Illinois Foundation is committed to the provision of critically needed services to partially sighted children," said Van C. Stone, executive administrator of the Foundation. "We are pleased to increase our gift to the Illinois College of Optometry and proud of our continuing partnership with ISVI and ICO."

For nearly 40 years the Lions have sponsored the low vision program, which brings ICO faculty members and students to ISVI twice a year for three days of clinical testing. Students at the school and other children in the state with low vision benefit from the service, directed by Derrald Taylor, OD, Professor in the Vision Rehabilitation Service at ICO. Eighty children are served each year. ♦

## Serving high risk children

The VSP Foundation has granted \$25,000 to the Illinois Eye Institute to support its Pediatric Outreach Program, an initiative geared toward high-risk children up to age 4 who are not receiving vision care.

Through partnerships with early intervention programs located throughout the Chicago area, Eye Institute faculty and students will complete eye exams for children and provide in-service training for parents and staff.

"Our goal," says Janice E. Scharre, OD '76, Dean and Vice President for Academic Affairs, "is to evaluate 800 children and educate parents and other professionals about vision conditions while enhancing the education we provide students and residents in pediatric eye care." ♦

## Join the Leadership Circle

In the Leadership Circle, donors make yearly contributions to the Annual Fund and other restricted funds. With a gift of \$1,000 or more, members support ICO's educational and clinical programs, helping to enhance teaching, research and services to the community. ♦



Mr. Steven H. Abbey and Ms. Pamela Brick	Mr. Anthony A. D'Andrea Fred R. DeHaan, OD	Dr. Alan A. Mandel and Mrs. Rae F. Mandel
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Kevin Crouch, OD		

For more information, contact Felicia Filbin, Director of Annual Giving, at (312) 949-7071, or [ffilbin@ico.edu](mailto:ffilbin@ico.edu).



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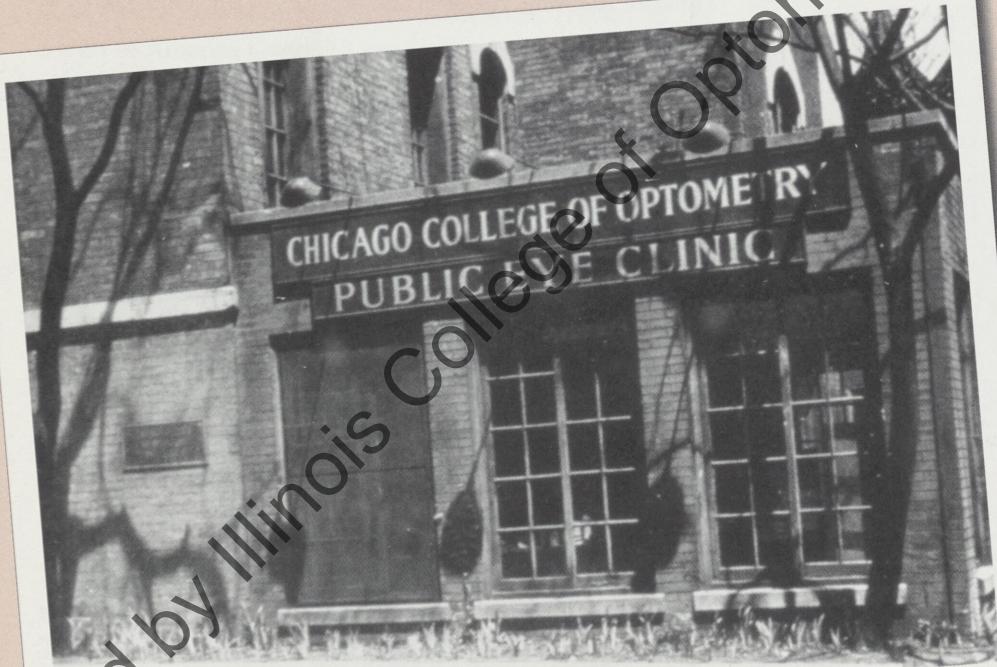
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*Remember When...*



### CCO

The Chicago College of Optometry, CCO, was officially established in 1949, one of only three schools in the United States to provide a full, five-year curriculum. Optometric scholars were recruited to teach, including the first African-American optometrist to become a faculty member at an accredited U.S. college: Dr. Junius Broadnax.

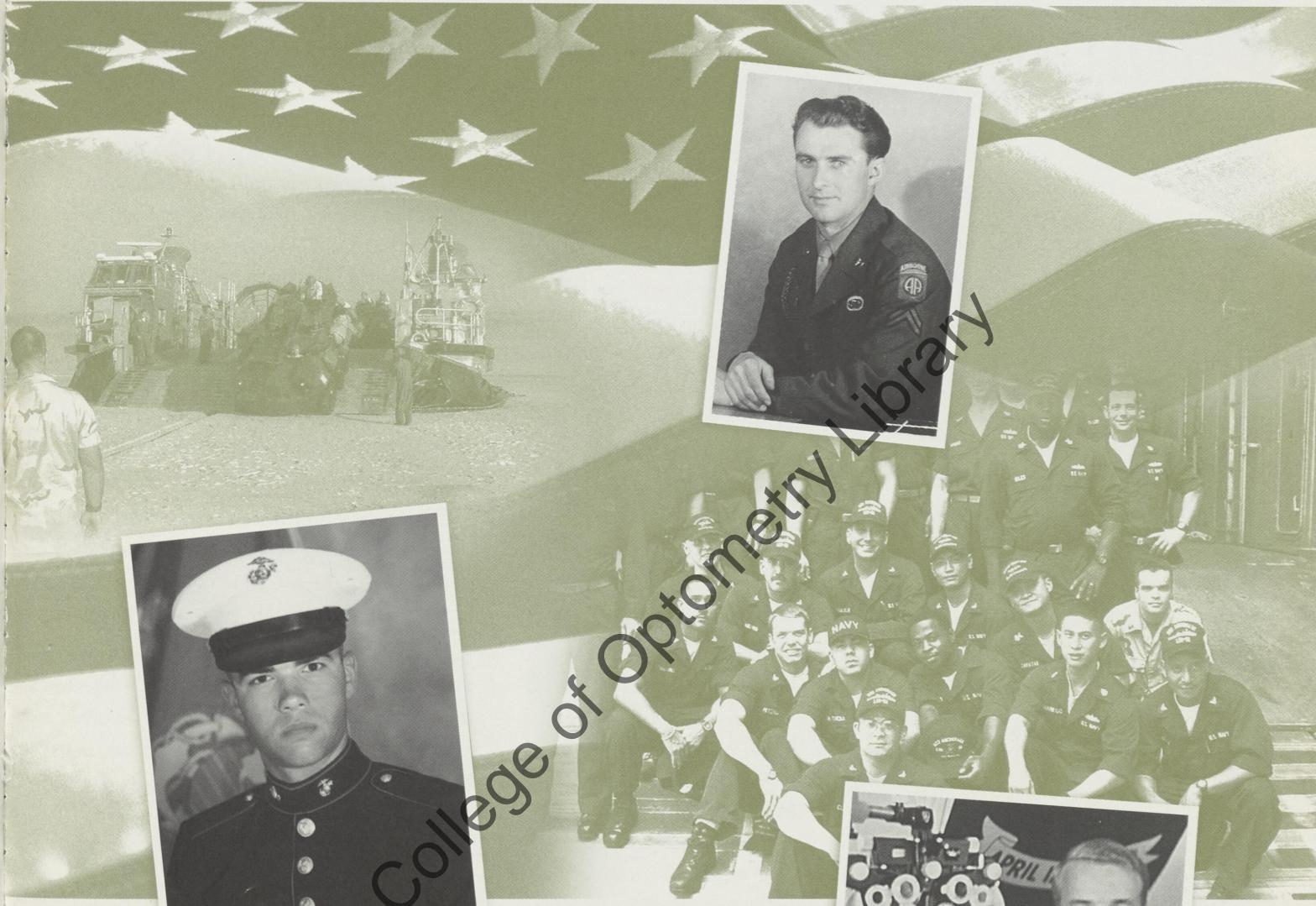
CCO merged with the Northern Illinois College of Optometry to become the Illinois College of Optometry in 1955.

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# ICO Matters

*The Magazine of the Illinois College of Optometry  
and the Illinois Eye Institute*

Volume 2 / Issue 3 / Fall 2003



## A Military Tradition

ICO alumni have served their country  
as well as their patients.

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# A Message from the President

Dear Alumni, Students, Colleagues and Friends,

Not so long ago, a new class of students arrived at ICO. As I looked at them, I saw enthusiasm and excitement about beginning a rigorous professional degree program, even in the face of anxiety about whether they will be successful. Here is the heartfelt encouragement I shared with them as they began their doctor of optometry degree studies:

1) Is it worth it to invest so much time, effort and money to become a doctor of optometry?

You bet it is! In the 36 years since I was a new student, the opportunities and experiences I have had as an optometrist have exceeded my expectations many times over.

2) To me, four years of professional degree studies seemed like a long time looking forward, but looking back, it was only a brief memory in a career full of the ability to really make a difference in people's lives. Involvement with activities beyond the academic and clinical program was an enriching part of my professional education, and I encourage you to be involved in your ICO community for that reason.

3) My late mother used to admonish me, "You can't do everything in a day, but you can do something!" She was right. Persistence is a key to success in a college of optometry, as it is in life itself.



4) Only you have control of your attitude. You can choose to get up happy and enthusiastic to take on each new day, or you can drag out of bed and say, "Woe is me. I'll never make it. The world is against me." Positive attitude is as much a key to your success at ICO as it is to your future career.

5) You are your greatest asset. Take care of yourself physically and emotionally. Have fun. Keep a balance in life. Protect and nourish yourself, and you will grow.

6) Lastly, as a professional, your life should be driven by doing what is right — right for your patients, right for your colleagues, right for your family, and right for your communities.

Remember, life itself doesn't come with guarantees. However, I believe the greatest likelihood for success comes to those who get involved, are persistent, keep a positive attitude, take care of themselves by keeping a balance in their lives, and most importantly, do what is right.

Best wishes to our new students as they work to join the ranks of our successful alumni four years from now.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arol Augsburger".

Arol Augsburger, OD  
President

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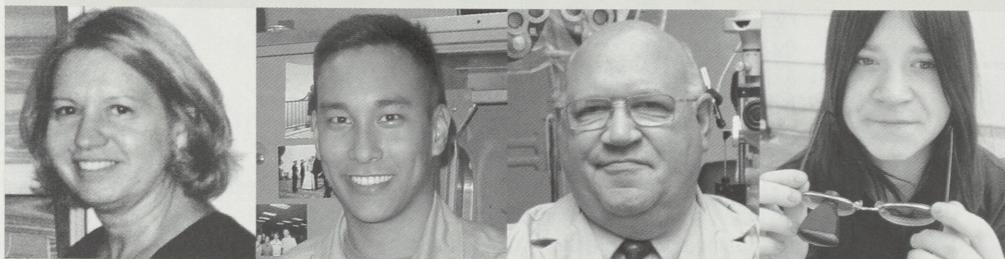
Al Pouch, Lloyd DeGrane

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**www.ico.edu**

# Letters to the Editor

Dear Ms. Marti,

I would like to thank President Augsburger and *ICO Matters* for dedicating much of the Spring 2003 issue to highlighting African-American alumni of your program. I was especially moved by Dr. Millicent Knight's account of her experience at ICO, her decision to move on to assist others, and the National Optometric Association historical cover story.

I am happy to see ICO's commitment to enhancing diversity and the current crop of minority students, who will carry on the affairs of the profession in the future. The features of individuals from various cultures gives this issue objectivity and balance that is often missing in stories with multiple convergent histories.

Thank you for featuring stories and histories that needed an appropriate place to be told.

Best regards,

Cynthia H. Green, OD

NOA President 2003

Asst. Professor of Clinical Optometry

TOSU College of Optometry, c/o 1992

Dear Editor:

The arrival of the Spring 2003 edition of *ICO Matters* initiated a flood of wonderful memories for me. The photograph of the first meeting of the National Optometric Association, which I attended as the AOA President at the time, sparked a recollection of working with Drs. C. Clayton Powell and John L. Howlette in their efforts to found the NOA.

The cover story, "Now and Then," is a testimonial to the wisdom and dedication of Drs. Powell and Howlette and the many colleagues who assisted them.

Many thanks for sending me a copy.

Sincerely,

Melvin D. Wolfberg, OD

ICO '90, Hon DOS

I just finished reading the latest *ICO Matters* [Spring 2003] and wanted to congratulate you. Not only is it a very classy looking magazine, its focus is bold and so timely. I had just worked on a Trends piece on student statistics that will be in the fall issue of ASCO's journal — we emphasized the area of diversity because that is a particular focus of the Vistakon grant, "The Eyes Have It" for the coming year, and it is very discouraging how little progress has been made in optometry with attracting under-represented minorities.

Patricia Coe O'Rourke

Director of Communications and Corporate Affairs  
Association of Schools and College of Optometry

Dear Editor,

The last issue of *ICO Matters* [Spring 2003] provided an in-depth look at ICO's awareness of the need to increase the presence of African-American students on campus and in the profession. As a current student, I see the College actively making efforts to increase diversity in the student body. For example:

- Visiting select historically black college career fairs
- Targeted mailings
- Contact with identifiable minority students
- Expanding the criteria for the Underrepresented Population Scholarship
- Increasing National Optometric Student Association (NOSA) involvement in campus touring, open house events, and interview day activities.

The other great community-based initiative at ICO has been the High School Recruitment Program. This program invites high school students to visit the College for a day of learning about the eye and how important optometrists can be in the community.

It is our hope that we not only recruit the best students to ICO, but provide them with the best education, with diversity being the cornerstone of success!

Ramona L. Baumfalk

NOSA Corresponding Secretary

Yes, I remember the clinic at CCO [that was pictured on the back of *ICO Matters*]. In 1949-50, I was one (the only one from NICO) of eight graduate students in a Master of Optometry program. Drs. Schoen and Murroughs were in charge of the program. Dr. E. Freeman was Dean.

Dr. Broadnax signed my application to take the Illinois Board with the warning that I must not fail as he had never signed for a failure.

I didn't.

Wm. Bickers, OD NICO '49

Master of Opt. CCO '50

To the editor,

I read the obituary of Dr. Al Kaminski in the [Spring] issue of *ICO Matters*; I had the distinct pleasure of working with him while I was on staff at Group Health Co-Operative of Puget Sound. Although Dr. Kaminski was an innovator and superb clinician, he was not a child prodigy. He did not graduate optometry school at the age of 12 ("NICO '45...born in 1933 in Germany"). He was a great human being with a keen sense of humor; he will be missed by many.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Stephen Lehrer, OD '79

Thank you for the correction, Dr. Lehrer!

# International Affairs

Dr. Scharre leads mission in Poland

Janice Scharre, OD '76, MA, Dean and Vice President for Academic Affairs, was appointed Working Group Chairperson of the Poland Refractive Error Study in Children (RESC) for the World Council of Optometry. Scharre traveled to Poznan, Poland, last summer to assess the feasibility of a study of refractive conditions in Polish children. She and her team have made recommendations to the WHO Executive Committee.

Scharre's team includes an international group of experts, including ICO Professor of Optometry, Jan Jurkus, OD '74. They met with the Polish Minister of Health, Dr. Leszek Sikorski to discuss optometry and eye care, as well as the RESC project in Poland. He expressed support of the project and willingness to provide some funding for the pilot study.

"The members of the working group, which included ophthalmologists, opticians, optometrists and physicians, did an outstanding job in assessing the feasibility of a study of this magnitude to be conducted," Scharre says.

As a result of the fact-finding mission, Scharre's group recommended that Poznan be considered as a potential site for a refractive error study in

European children.

The RESC project is the result of the World Health Organization's VISION 2020: The Right to Sight initiative launched in 1999. Its goal is to reduce the global burden of blindness currently affecting an estimated 40-45 million people worldwide. The Refractive Error Studies in Children are a key component of WHO's mission to eliminate disability due to refractive errors. As a result, a series of studies on the prevalence of refractive error and related visual impairment in school-aged children has been completed around the world.



## Poland RESC Working Group Members:

Dr. Janice Scharre, WCO Fellow and Chair

Dr. Janice Jurkus, WCO Fellow

Mr. Bart Pochanke, WCO Fellow, Poland Liaison

Dr. Bogdan Miskowiak, Chair of Optometry and Biology of Visual System, University of Medical Sciences, Poznan, Poland

Dr. Halina Manczak, Clinical Ophthalmologist

Mr. Pawel Kolder, Chamber of Polish Opticians

Mr. Robert Chappell, President-Elect, European Council of Optometry and Optics

Dr. Kevin Naidoo, University of Durban-Westville and International Center for Eyecare Education, Advisor

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ICO launches the nation's broadest index of vision science literature

# Bigger and Better

Now the most comprehensive index of vision-related periodicals is available through a new ICO website. VisionCite ([www.visioncite.com](http://www.visioncite.com)), based in the Illinois College of Optometry Library, provides an index of more than 184,000 articles from the medical, ophthalmic, optic, optometric, and other vision related journals received in the library.

"We have been working on this for more than 17 years," says Gerald Dujcik, ICO's Director of Learning Resources. "It's wonderful to see it come to fruition." Dujcik says the advent of SIRSI computer software, which the library uses, has been the most significant contributor to the introduction of VisionCite.

Thanks to Dujcik and his staff, all periodicals received by the library are reviewed for articles on optometry, ophthalmology, reading, perception, contact lenses and other vision related subjects. Currently more than 200 periodicals are in the collection, with 110 regularly indexed. Approximately 12,000 article citations are added to VisionCite each year.

This makes VisionCite the biggest and broadest index available. Still, Dujcik says, to do the most thorough search for materials, users should combine a VisionCite search with a search of PubMed, provided by the National Library of Medicine. "Use both to find the most," he recommends. "They are complementary."

Though VisionCite does not provide abstracts of articles, it does reference all citations by keywords and subject. Any periodical referenced by the site is available in the library.

To access VisionCite, users must obtain an ID number and PIN through the library. Then searching the site is easy, Dujcik says. Users can search using author(s), article title(s), journal title, date, volume or page numbers — or any combination of these — using Boolean operators (and, or, not) and adjacency operators (near, adj, same, with). They can use either Basic Search or Power Search engines. Help screens are available online.

In addition to periodical citations, students can find items the faculty have put on reserve by instructor, course name or course ID. They can also send email to the library for interlibrary loan, book and journal recommendations.

Anyone at ICO has free access to VisionCite. A one-month free trial is available to anyone who asks. ICO alumni can get a 50 percent discount for the first year, then use of the site is available at a 20 percent discount or \$80 annually. In addition, the library provides free photocopies of articles in the collection to ICO alumni. Active members of the Leadership Circle, upon request, will not be charged for access to VisionCite. ♦



The Gregg Steele/ICO Players were on stage again this summer with a production of "Don't Be Afraid of the Dark" by Tim Kelly. More than two dozen members of the community participated. To view photos, go to: <http://icoplayers.homestead.com>.

## The Players:

**The Creeper:** Dr. Neil Hodur

**Skull:** Calvin Dalton

**Mrs. Bones:** Tonya Reynolds

**Zip Whittle:** Michael Lopykinski

**Lilac Cooper:** Rosemary Gonzalez

**Ralph:** Dr. Leonard Messner

**Miranda Winkler:** Ferine Ali

**Velma Cringe:** Jeannie Wang

**George Parr:** Dr. Moe Eid

**Deputy Graves:** Adam Klemens

**Sylvia Frye:** Dr. Joan Sears

**Radio Announcer:** Dr. Arol Augsburger

**Molly Devine:** Dr. Tina Brandonisio

**Director:** Dr. Joan Sears

**Stage Manager:** Rosemary Gonzales

**Technical/Sound Crew:**

Neil Bajaj

Tammi Carlson

Megan Draper

Maureen Finley

**Artistic Consultants:**

Gerald Dujisk

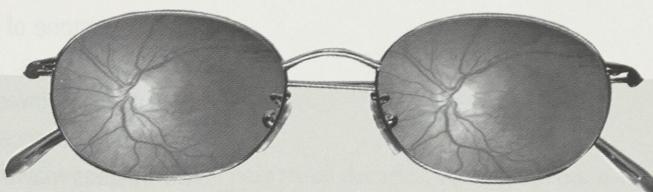
Dr. Eileen Gable

Mike Mazurkiewicz

Al Pouch

Dr. Ruth Trachimoqicz

**Blindspot Coordinator:** Dr. Rebecca Zoltoski



## Continuing Education Calendar

### JANUARY 18, 2004

**Featuring Dr. Daniel Roberts, Dr. Pamela Lowe '88 and Dr. Mary Lou French '77**

**Topics:** New research information and therapeutic management of ocular disease; Advanced technology for fundus evaluation and diagnosis and pediatric aspects of clinical practice.

### FEBRUARY 22, 2004

**Featuring Dr. Bruce Onofrey '82 and Dr. Elyse Chaglasian**

**Topics:** Oral medications, the pharmacology of glaucoma, fluoroquinolones – the next generation and refractive surgery update.

### MARCH 7, 2004

**Featuring Dr. Leo Skorin '82 and Dr. Charles Faron '89**

**Topics:** Neurologic Disease, Facial Dystonias, Cosmetic Treatments and Anterior Segment Disease and Treatment.

- All programs will be offered on Sundays from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. at ICO
- Each program will feature six hours of TPA Certified CE (TQ)
- Each program will cost \$165 w/test or \$140 w/o test (Test is a take home exam)
- Breakfast and lunch will be provided

### LOCATION

3241 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60616

*Parking is available at the Michigan Avenue Clinic Parking Area.*

For more information contact

Dr. Vince Brandys '90 at (312) 949-7079 or [Vbrandys@ico.edu](mailto:Vbrandys@ico.edu)

The cornerstone of any charitable organization is its governing board. In ICO's case, this is the Board of Trustees.

Our bylaws invest in the Trustees the authority to set policy, provide oversight, hire the President and accept fiduciary responsibility for the College. Serving without compensation, ICO Trustees may be elected to four three-year terms.

ICO's success as America's optometry school starts with countless hours of analysis, research, deliberation and planning by the Trustees. This diverse group of talented, dedicated individuals then advises and assists the President and administration in charting a course to grow and develop our institution.

Missing in this rather sterile description of governance is the identity of the bright, engaging, competent people who serve as your Trustees. Although not often visible, the Trustees define the profound commitment and institutional pride that is shared by all ICO alumni, students and staff.

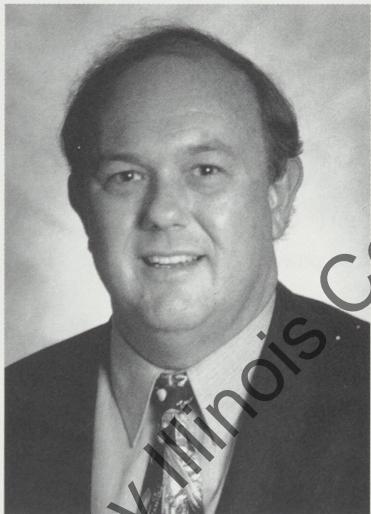
Most of the work of the Board is done without fanfare or headlines, but with "Eye on Trustees," we briefly place the Trustees in the spotlight. In upcoming editions of *ICO Matters*, we will profile the individual members of the Board so that the ICO community at large can become acquainted with the interesting, intense and charming individuals who comprise the Illinois College of Optometry's Board of Trustees.

Now, enjoy meeting Dr. Albert Rodriguez.

— Thomas A. Lawless, OD '71  
*Chairman of the Board of Trustees*

# Who's on Board

**Albert H. Rodriguez, Jr., OD '74, DOS:  
Optometrist and Entrepreneur**



Albert H. Rodriguez, Jr. attributes nearly all his success to his education at the Illinois College of Optometry. Of course the five eye clinics he owned throughout Florida for 10 years can be easily traced to his degree from the College. But Rodriguez says the rest of his vast business experiences have also been built on the steady shoulders of his position as a doctor of optometry in his community and the lessons he learned about human nature through the practice of optometry.

Rodriguez's first exposure to optometry came through his father, Albert Rodriguez Sr., NICO '49, DOS. The younger Rodriguez recalls optometrists and community leaders frequently meeting and socializing in his house. They were friends of his father, who served as Secretary of the Florida State Board of Optometry, was active in the American Optometric Association and was involved with ICO, serving on the Alumni Council of the College for many years. When the elder

Rodriguez died, the College named the Albert Rodriguez Memorial Auditorium after him, following a drive by CK Hill, NICO '49, DOS, for the Alumni Council to establish a scholarship for Albert Jr. to attend ICO, even though he was only 14 years old at the time.

"Optometry was a major part of my life, even at that age," Rodriguez recalls. "Dr. Hill and Dr. Lou Serchia [NICO '47], who were classmates of my father's at NICO, became my mentors when my Dad died. Because of them and the scholarship, I chose optometry over medicine. It was clearly the profession for me."

Rodriguez's transition from doctor to businessman happened almost before he knew it. Upon graduation from ICO in 1974, he worked in an established private practice in Tampa, Fla. In 1975 he bought his first office and married his high school sweetheart, Donna, a physical therapist.

In 1977, Rodriguez took on a partner and established practices in small towns, with four practices in his fold by 1979. In 1980 he started a one-hour optical, which helped him consolidate all his laboratory work into one location. That was also the year Rodriguez sold his original Tampa practice, concentrating his efforts on small-town locations. "I realized that small-towns were underserved when it came to eye care," Rodriguez says.

In the meantime, in 1978, the Rodriguezes together opened an office for physical rehabilitation therapy. Rodriguez helped with the administration and financial side of the business. When he realized he "was becoming more involved in Donna's business,

RehabWorks, than in mine," he says, he decided to focus his energy on physical rehabilitation. "Optometry served me extremely well in the time I practiced it. But I was running two professional businesses and seeing patients in five offices and eventually it was too much. I divested myself of my optometry offices in 1985 and switched gears to RehabWorks. I am an optometrist by education, and became a businessman by default."

By 1980, RehabWorks had grown enough to become attractive to outside buyers. The Rodriguezes were entertaining an average of one serious offer every year for 10 years. "That was a tremendous business learning experience for me," says Rodriguez. Over time RehabWorks had clinics and contracts in 26 states with more than 2,000 employees. In 1989, the Rodriguezes sold RehabWorks, though they remained active in it for a few years longer.

At that time, Mrs. Rodriguez focused on raising the couple's two children and Dr. Rodriguez concentrated on other business ventures. He bought two nursing homes that were run down and poorly managed. He put a management team together to remodel and properly manage them. It took a year-and-a-half to turn the skilled nursing facilities around and lease them to an experienced nursing home operator.

Likewise, Mrs. Rodriguez didn't leave business for long. In 1998, a former employee of RehabWorks approached her about opening a new clinic. Today, the new company, Rehab Therapy Works, has more than 100 employees.

In addition to everything else over the

past three decades, Rodriguez became an active ICO alumnus. He had maintained close relationships with members of the Board of Trustees and he was interested in giving back to the institution that served him so well. In 1992, Rodriguez was invited to join the Board.

"It was enlightening and interesting," he says of his early experience. "In 1996, when the College went through an administrative change, I was able to apply my business experience to assist ICO in the transition."

At that time, Rodriguez and Drs. John Brandt and Joe Henry were appointed by the Board to manage ICO. The three-man team ran the daily operations while making strategic changes. Their work laid the foundation for the new president to concentrate on moving forward without having to deal with the logistics of the past.

With that contribution behind him, Rodriguez was elected Chairman of the ICO Board of Trustees in 1998, a position he held until 2001. Now as he nears the mandatory end to his tenure after serving 12 years as a Trustee, Rodriguez says he has enjoyed his work and contribution to ICO.

"It's comforting to see these men and women of the Board of Trustees making decisions that they take very seriously. The Board is a hard working group of volunteers who serve unselfishly for the College. I am proud to be part of this experienced, diverse group of men and women dedicated to the profession of optometry and ICO." ♦

Cover Story



Throughout the course of its history, ICO students, faculty and alumni have served in the United States military. The tradition continues today.

# A Military Tradition

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**C**onsidering our country's current experience of wartime, we decided at *ICO Matters* to salute the optometrist-soldiers who have served the United States. Toward that end, we say thank you to every one. For practical purposes, we profile only four in this feature.

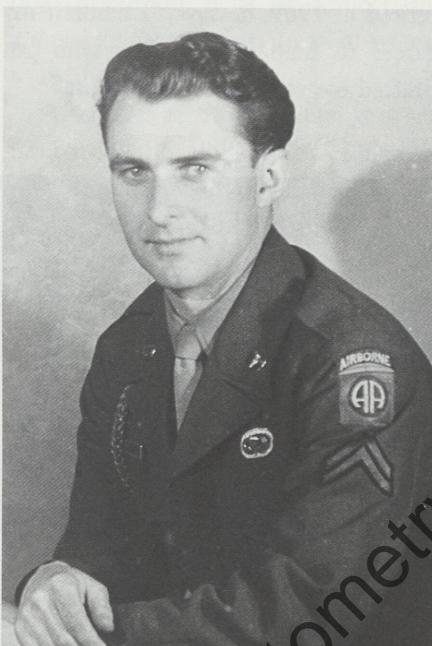
Despite the size of our unscientific survey, we found some common themes among the ICO alumni veterans. Perhaps the most prevalent one was that joining the armed services provided a significant advantage to them as optometrists. The first, and perhaps most obvious advantage is that the military helps students pay for their educations. Indeed, every year some ICO students benefit from military scholarship support. Of the veterans we spoke to, at least two flatly stated that without the GI Bill, they probably wouldn't have made it to optometry school.

More surprisingly, the two veterans who spent time in the service as optometrists reported that it gave them experience and opportunity they wouldn't have had in civilian life. They were expected to do more — in some cases with far fewer resources — than any newly minted optometrist would have to do in private practice. They saw more patients, and they were given responsibilities, such as making medical diagnoses and prescribing pharmaceuticals, before the rest of the profession in civilian life.

At least one career military optometrist mentioned that the service can be a great boon to building a private practice. Add to that the retirement and other benefits that come with serving in the armed forces, and the commitment becomes even more attractive.

Of course, a further aspect of service in foreign wars affected each of the respon-

dents in a more fundamental way. War produces death and great suffering. Each of the respondents mentioned the profound effect witnessing this suffering had on them and how it helped confirm their desire to help people.



**Larry Vogel, MCO '48**

Larry Vogel got his first view of war in April 1945, as the German Army was collapsing in Europe. A newly minted paratrooper with the 82nd Airborne Division, Vogel witnessed the largest capture of enemy soldiers in history, when 150,000 German soldiers surrendered to American forces near the Elbe River. After V-E Day, Vogel spent a brief period in France before being assigned to Berlin and then to Gen. Eisenhower's headquarters in Frankfurt.

In many ways, Vogel caught a break when he was assigned to a medical detachment. He had worked for awhile in a pharmacy in his native Wisconsin. Soon he was in charge of prescription

drugs for 10,000 Airborne personnel, a fairly heavy responsibility given the postwar chaos of Germany's big cities.

"Conditions were horrible," Vogel recalls. "You couldn't even drink the water." A carton of cigarettes could fetch \$200 on the black market. Given that he was responsible for valuable array of drugs including morphine, Vogel found it useful to keep a foundling doberman pinscher in the dispensary with him.

Being in a medical detachment exposed Vogel to a variety of medical professionals. Before the war he'd considered becoming a pharmacist, but when he returned stateside in 1946, Vogel decided on optometry school. The admissions process was a little simpler then. "You'd go down to the Veterans Administration," he recalls, "and have an in-depth interview into your background, including previous education, and your military service record."

Vogel enrolled in Monroe College of Optometry, a precursor to the Illinois College of Optometry. He estimates his class was 95 percent veterans. After school, Vogel went on to establish a successful private practice and to found a contact lens company.

Looking back on his military service, Vogel says his experience of post-war suffering confirmed his desire to help people. Yet perhaps the greatest legacy of the war was the GI Bill, which made it possible for a generation of veterans to make better lives. "I think it was the best thing to ever happen to this country," he says of the legislation. "It helped educate a lot of people for this country. Without it I might not have gone to school."

## Cover Story

### William Pearce, NICO '49

William Pearce enlisted in the Army in 1942, and after three months of basic training found himself on a boat to North Africa. He saw a pretty good deal of the war with the infantry as it invaded Sicily, landed at Anzio and fought its way up the Italian peninsula, before moving on to France. His view of the fighting was so good that he earned a Purple Heart and a Bronze and a Silver Star along the way.

After the war, Pearce re-evaluated his prior ambitions for medical school. With so many veterans returning home to take advantage of the GI Bill, the medical field seemed a little crowded. Having been acquainted with a few optometrists, he set his sights on that profession and enrolled in the Northern Illinois College of Optometry, graduating in 1949.

When the Army called him back in 1953, Pearce decided to make a career of it, remaining in the service until 1969, when he retired to private practice.

The profession of optometry went through significant changes in the course of Pearce's career, and in some respects being in the military put him in the vanguard. Military optometrists were some of the first to expand the purview of the profession to more "medical" responsibilities. The age-old turf war between ophthalmology and optometry was in full force in the early 1950s, with the MDs ruling the roost. "They didn't want you to do anything," Pearce says, summing up the medical establishment's attitude toward ODs. "But in the service, they wanted you to do everything."

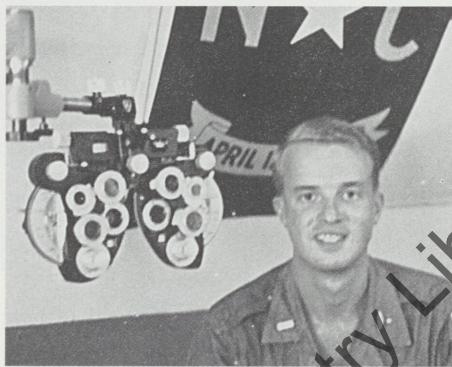
The rivalry manifested itself in other ways as well. When he returned to the Army in 1953, Pearce says, an optometrist wouldn't get an officer's commission "unless he fought for it." Pearce did so and was one of the first optometrists to get one. Until he retired in 1969, he says, "I made it my career to help optometrists who got drafted to get their commissions."

getting their eyes checked," he recalls of the 16 months he spent at Ireland Army Hospital in Fort Knox, Ky.

Eventually Whitener was put on a slow boat to Vietnam, headed for the 101st Airborne Division base camp at Phan Rang. On arriving in country, however, Whitener discovered that all the equipment he had painstakingly assembled for his dispensary had disappeared, never to be seen again. He asked his mother to send his own equipment from home, and he eventually cobbled that together with some cast-off equipment from an Air Force flight surgeon to make a field clinic. (While he waited for the equipment, he put in a couple months helping out the camp's very busy STD clinic.)

Whitener's service in Vietnam had its trials, especially the occasional difficulty of getting prescriptions filled. Prescriptions and glasses had to travel to and from the lab via jeep convoy through the jungle, and often there was a long lag time. "I sometimes had glasses arrive for GIs who had already been killed in action," he recalls somberly. "I always hoped that [their want of eyeglasses] didn't have a role in their getting killed."

On the whole, Whitener found the Army a good place to practice. Military ODs were "ahead of the curve" for many of the changes in the profession, such as prescribing medication. Still, full-time military service was not his cup of tea. In 1977 Whitener took a position with the American Optometric Association while finishing out his service with the Army Reserve and occasional duty at the Walter Reed Army Hospital. Today he



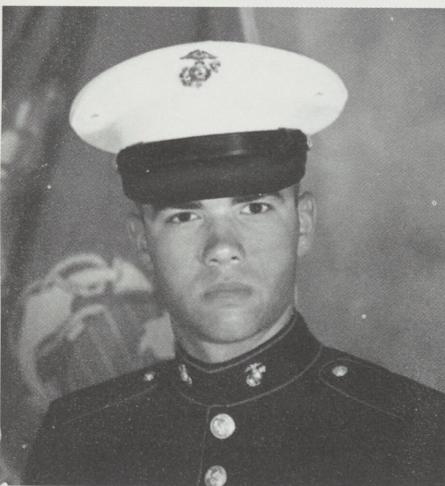
**John Whitener, OD '64**

John Whitener graduated from ICO in 1964, just as the United States was ramping up the war in Vietnam. The military was drafting optometrists, and Whitener enlisted hoping to have a little more choice in where he got posted. "I thought I would serve my minimum tour, get out, go back to my hometown in North Carolina, start a practice, and live happily ever after," he says. "None of that happened."

Instead Whitener spent most of his career with the military. One of the first generation of ODs to be drafted as optometrists, his early experiences were bracing. For one thing, he saw a lot of patients. "Every morning I'd go to the eye clinic, and there would be lines going around the corner of enlistees

serves as Assistant Director of Government Relations with the AOA.

Whitener encourages students and grads to consider the Reserve as an option. Although he was called up for five months of active duty during Desert Storm, the usual Reserve commitment is two days a month and two weeks in the summer. And it's a good way to meet other medical professionals in your community and even to build a practice.



#### Thomas Kline

Kline, class of '06, joined the Marines in 1989 hoping to find the discipline he needed to succeed in college. He headed to boot camp the day after he graduated from high school and soon enough learned a great deal about why discipline matters. A year later he was in the Persian Gulf fighting in Operation Desert Storm.

"One thing the military taught me was attention to detail while being aware of the big picture," Kline says. In "trying situations," he explains, attention to detail is more than just an ideal

engrained in Marines during training. Calling in the exact grid coordinates for an air strike or medevac can be the difference between life and death.

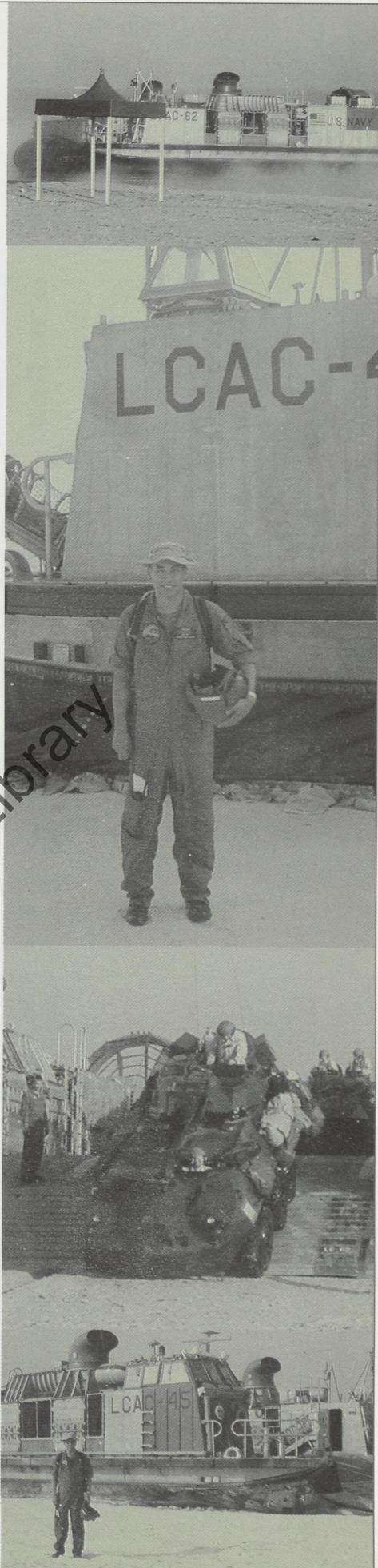
But, Kline says, "The most important thing I learned through chaos and tragedy is the value of human life, how important it is to respect and appreciate that, and to do what we can to help others."

After Desert Storm, Kline was stationed in the Philippines. There he would be called on for a different kind of service when Mount Pinatubo erupted. "We were digging out buildings and people," Kline recalls. "It solidified how important life is."

After six years in the Marine Corps, it's safe to say Kline got what he was after. He put himself through college, thanks largely to the GI Bill, and is now in his second year at ICO.

One of Kline's lasting impressions from the service is the camaraderie and teamwork that developed during the toughest of times. In order to survive, he says, you have to have a tight support network. He has that at ICO. "The faculty and students at ICO are people I know I can rely on the rest of my life," he says. ♦

— Dave Mulcahey



# Ship & Shore

Second-year student Al Licup goes from sea to optometry

Two years ago, Albert S. Licup, 27, was at a crossroads. Should he continue on the Navy career path that put him in charge of \$32 million hovercrafts and a crew of 40? Or should he follow a distant calling to pursue a health care career?

In a way, he decided to do both. Licup enrolled in the Illinois College of Optometry and then was awarded a three-year Armed Forces Health Professions Scholarship. He will serve as a Navy optometrist for three years after graduating in 2006.

To attend ICO, Licup moved from California where he was serving as a lieutenant in the United States Navy. He started out as an ordnance division officer in charge of weapons systems on guided missile cruisers and then was a detachment officer responsible for three hovercrafts which were deployed to the Persian Gulf. In the last two years of his five-year naval experience, Licup was an instructor at the Expeditionary Warfare Training Group, where he taught prospective officers in charge of hovercrafts what their job entailed.



Photo by Geoffrey Goodfellow, OD '01

As a second-year student at ICO, Licup applies the lessons he learned in the Navy, such as the importance of leadership. "I learned from being in the service not to just sit back, but to take an active role," he says.

Toward that end, Licup serves as an ICO liaison to the American Optometric Student Association. He is a volunteer representative for the Class of 2006 at faculty curriculum review meetings. He has also served as a tour guide and host leading prospective students and families on school tours, a student ambassador at Northwestern University (his alma mater), and a Navy representative at the ICO Practice Symposium.

After completing his degree and fulfilling his scholarship requirements, Licup plans to stay in the Navy and move up the ranks as far as he can before leaving active duty. "I enjoyed serving as a Navy officer and I get a chance to do it again," he says. "Only this time I'll be taking care of sailors and Marines, not as an officer in a warfare role, but making sure they're well taken care of in a health care role." ♦

— Ruth Carol

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# 2002 Private Practice Clerks



Photo by Geoffrey Goodfellow, OD '01

Eight students participated in the Private Practice Clerkship program last summer. In the program, students between their first and second years of study are placed in the offices of volunteer optometric practitioners, where they work as paid technicians as they gain hands-on experience in the business and practice of optometry.

Participants over the summer of 2003 were (back row) Jason Blowe, Robert Kingus, Timothy Wilson; (front row) Heather McLeod, Ramona Baumfalk, Emily Konczal, Kathleen Charo. Not Pictured: Lan-Anh Nguyen

## Congratulations!

Fourth-year student **Sima Lal** has been awarded the American Optometric Association's 2003 Dr. Seymour Galina Grant. The prize was established through a bequest from the late Seymour Galina, NICO '48, former President of the ICO Alumni Association, and a long-time AOA member.

The Galina Grant program is administered by the AOA Endowment Fund. ♦

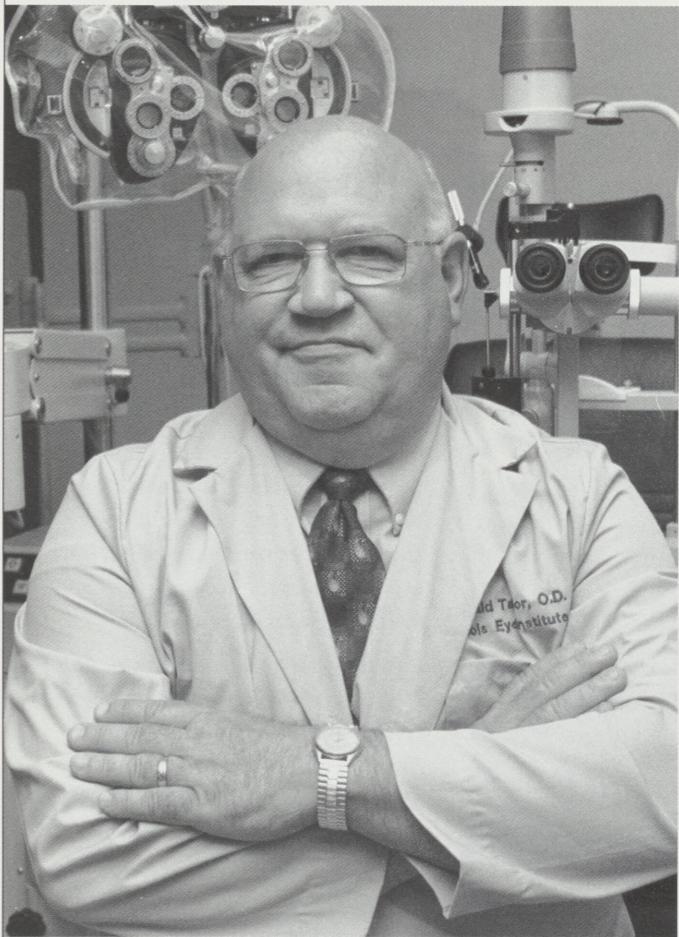
### 2003 First Year Class Profile

#### Admissions Statistics

Applicants	708
Interviews	425
Enrolled	160

#### Class Demographics

Females	102 (64%)
Males	58 (36%)
Minorities	60 (38%)
African-American	7 (4%)
Asian	47 (29%)
Latino	3 (2%)
Native American	3 (2%)



# The Vet

Derrald Taylor is a veteran ICO faculty member, as well as a veteran of the Vietnam War era.

Eight months into his teaching career at the Illinois College of Optometry, Derrald Taylor, OD '68, MS, was drafted. The United States Naval Reserve was looking for a few good optometrists.

Taylor served from May 1969 to June 1972 at the Boston Navy Hospital. He was the optometrist working with four ophthalmologists in the hospital's eye clinic. The Vietnam War was raging.

During active duty, Taylor saw his share of soldiers with eye, and other, injuries. He treated primarily Navy, Marine and Army active duty soldiers and retirees. Anyone from the first naval district, which was covered by Boston Navy Hospital, who had received a serious injury in Vietnam was air evacuated back within a day or two. The 175-bed hospital had a daily census of 375. "It was a very busy place," recalls Taylor. He remembers the worst case he saw was a young soldier hit by friendly fire. He convalesced at the hospital for nearly three years. Despite the fact that every major system in his body was affected, the soldier walked out of the hospital. "He was 96 pounds when he left, but he walked out on his own."

Taylor views his days in Boston as a tremendous experience from both a teaching and a learning perspective. At the time, few residencies existed. "Basically I did a three-year residency in ophthalmology," he says. "It just wasn't an official one." Taylor jokes that he can never be critical of the time there because that's where he met his wife, Nancy, of 31 years. She was a nurse and contact lens patient.

Although the "military side of things" was interesting, Taylor didn't want to pursue a naval career. In fact, he wanted to come back to ICO because he felt he had gained experience he could share with the students. Rejoining the ICO faculty in 1972, Taylor finished out his six-year commitment to the Navy as an inactive Navy recruit and received an honorable discharge.

These days Taylor is usually in clinic teaching. During the winter quarter, he teaches low vision labs and lectures to 3rd-year students. His tenure at ICO has also included a variety of administrative roles, including Director of Clinics for seven years.

"I get a lot of reward from seeing students understand concepts and the impact they can have on both the health and quality of life of their patients," says Taylor, adding, "The College is a good place to work. The faculty and staff are friendly and focused on serving the patients." ♦

— Ruth Carol

**A new fund to support Low Vision Studies has been established  
in honor of Dr. Derrald Taylor. For more information, please contact Felicia Filbin,  
Director of Annual Giving, at (312) 949-7071.**



# Youthful Enthusiasm

## Teen doesn't let eye condition get her down

A typical teen she is not. Sure, she's itching to get her learner's permit to drive and likes so many popular bands, she can't pick just one favorite.

But this high school junior is different. She's in Marines ROTC at Eisenhower High School. Extracurricular classes include third-year Spanish. She counts woodworking as her favorite hobby and wants to be a carpenter when she grows up.

And then there's the other thing that sets this Blue Island teen apart from her classmates, her brothers, and her sister: Sara Hagemeyer has congenital nystagmus.

According to ICO Professor of Optometry Donald Taylor, OD '68, Sara's condition is part of the diagnosis of oculocutaneous albinism.

Nystagmus (derived from the Greek *nystagmos*, meaning wobbly head movement) is characterized by low vision as a result of many possible diagnoses. Congenital nystagmus is often the result of albinism, an inherited condition in which one's body does not form pigment or forms little pigment.

People with nystagmus often need to adopt a tilted or turned head posture to gain optimal use of their vision. Prisms, biotics, and corrective lenses can lessen the effects. Computer technology has been developed that can help as well, in the form of software that enlarges screen print or reads the screen

and enhances content with voice output.

Parents of children diagnosed with nystagmus are referred to a range of resources for education needs, genetic counseling, vocational rehabilitation, and other management resources. Nonprofit groups such as the National Association of Albinism and Hypopigmentation (NOAH) and Lions Clubs offer support and additional resources.

Though there is not a groundbreaking new treatment — or, more correctly, management — on the horizon for nystagmus, Dr. Taylor is hopeful that in the future, new treatments will be able to alter genes affecting pigment development at the cellular level.

"What is gaining ground," he says, "is the understanding of the genetics and the slow process toward genetic engineering that could detect the condition and perhaps some day correct it."

While it clearly affects her daily life, nystagmus doesn't slow Sara down. Before applying for her learner's permit, she needs to find an after-school job to cover the costs of her auto insurance. No doubt soon she'll be just like any other 16-year-old: offering to run out for a gallon of milk, just to get some time behind the wheel. ♦

R.L. Searfoss, NICO '43, flew bombing missions in WWII. Today he flies homemade, award-winning radio-controlled model planes.

# Eye in the Sky

When R. L. Searfoss enrolled at ICO's precursor, the Northern Illinois College of Optometry in 1939, he was already following a family tradition of eye care. During the early 1900s, Searfoss's grandfather was an oculist, one of the country's first traveling "spec-fitters." Searfoss's father was a jeweler/optometrist, and the first president of the Missouri State Board of Optometry.

With a family tradition established, NICO, where his father served on the Board of Directors, seemed the perfect fit for Searfoss.

That's not to say it was easy. "We were still in the middle of the Depression and times were very hard," says Searfoss. "My fellow students were wonderful though. As a matter of fact, considering the state of things, we often had a little too much fun!"

Searfoss's time at NICO was cut short, however, with the intensification of World War II and the implementation of the Selective

Service Act. "I was just beginning my time in the clinic when I realized my number was going to be called sooner rather than later," he says. After speaking to his professors, Searfoss went downtown to take the entrance exam to join the Airforce Cadet Corps.

Within weeks Searfoss was flying B17s. Before the end of the war, he flew 24 bombing missions and had served as a flight instructor. Of his missions, Searfoss says, "One was enough." The flying was wonderful, he mused, until they had to start shooting.

Perhaps the most memorable mission for Searfoss was the time his plane was hit from above by enemy fire. "The nose of the plane was blown off and I had to get 10 men home safely," he recalls. He did get those men home and, in 1945, as the war ended, Searfoss picked up his ICO diploma in England.

Back in the States, Searfoss settled down in Mexico, Mo. with

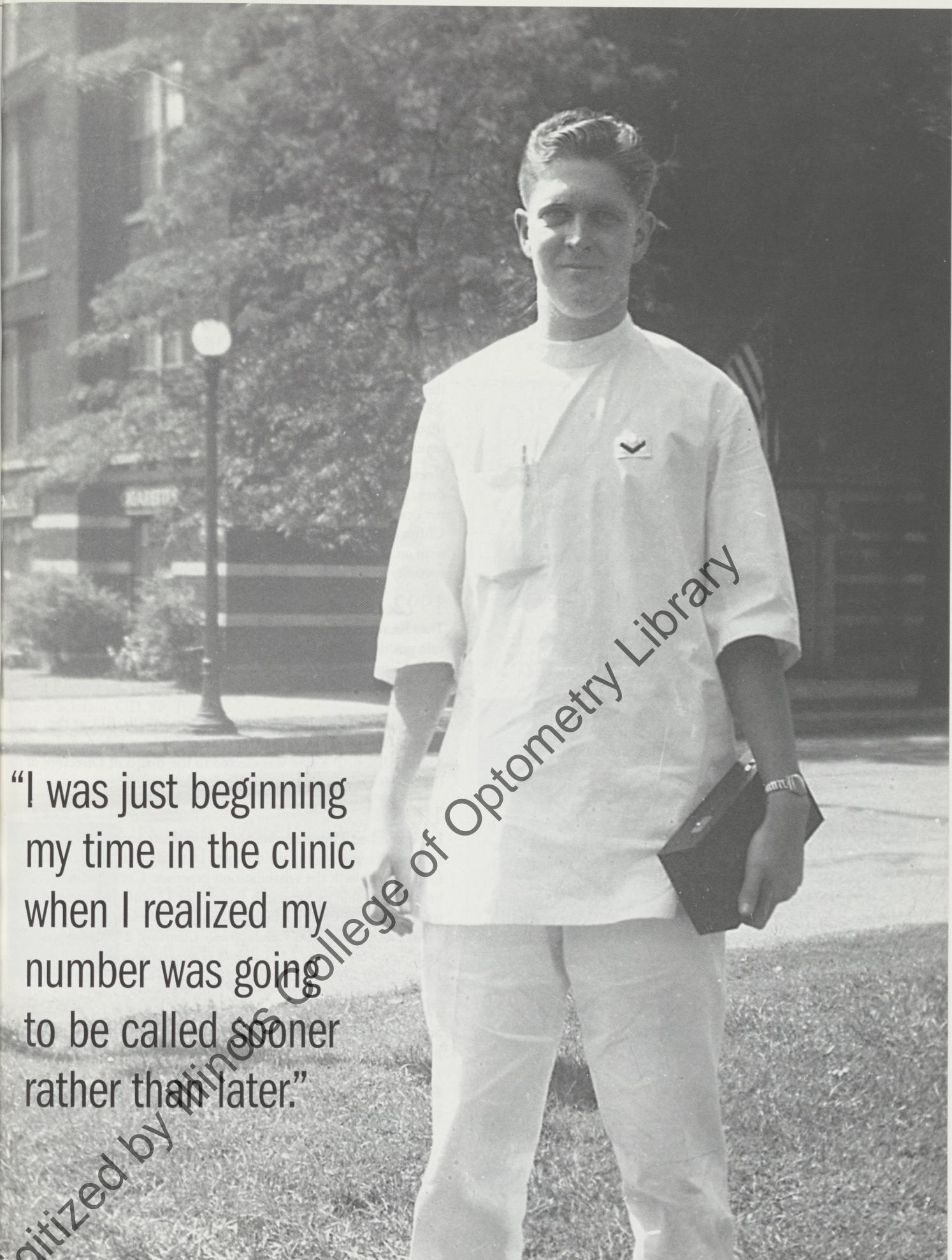
Mary, his wife and sweetheart since 4th grade. He started an optometry practice, began lecturing across the country, and invented tools for visual training. He retired just 10 years ago at the age of 72.

Now at 82, Searfoss devotes much of his time to radio-controlled model airplanes. He's built 26 large models that hang from the vaulted ceiling of his "airplane room" at home. "People just gasp when they walk in there," he says. His largest model, a 10-and-a-half foot long, 40-pound B17, won the National Memphis Belle Classic.

Today the family's interest in optometry is still going strong. Searfoss's son John, who has since passed away, graduated from ICO in 1976. John's daughter, Searfoss's granddaughter, will carry on the family legacy when she completes her degree in optometry this year.

"Optometry has been very good for our family," Searfoss says. ♦

— Chryssa Atkinson



**“I was just beginning  
my time in the clinic  
when I realized my  
number was going  
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# Class Notes

## 1965

**John F. Amos** has been named dean of the UAB School of Optometry. Amos has served as interim dean since October 2000.

## 1974

**Karl S. Csiszer** lives in Plano, Ill., with his wife of 30 years, Laurie. He has a private practice in Sandwich, Ill., where he will celebrate his 30th anniversary next May. The Csiszers have a daughter Valerie, who is a sophomore at the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point. She is pursuing a degree in physical therapy. Their son, Daniel, is a senior at Marmion Military Academy in Aurora, Ill., where he plays football.

**Jan Jurkus** has been named one of the "50 Most Influential Women in Optical" by Vision Monday newspaper. She was cited in part for founding DIVA (Dedication, Innovation, Vision, Achievement), a professional organization for women ODs.

## 1977

In the May 2003 issue of *Contact Lens Spectrum*, **Irwin Azman** published the article "The Contact Lens Epidemic: Trends in the Contact Lens industry lead one practitioner to rethink conventional wisdom."

The article "Turbocharge Your Practice with Contact Lenses" by **James K. Kirchner** ran in the September issue of "New OD," a supplement to *Optometric Management*.

## 1979

**Timothy Wingert** was installed as President of the Missouri Optometric Association at its 102nd Annual Convention held in October in Kansas City, Mo. Wingert has been a leader in Missouri optometry for many years, serving on the MOA board first as UMSL Faculty Liaison, then as Secretary, Treasurer, President-Elect and now MOA President. He has been active in the MOA Public Relations Committee as well as working with special projects within the diabetic community and advocacy groups.



## 1980

**Timothy McMahon** has been appointed Treasurer of the American Optometric Foundation. He was also appointed to the Food and Drug Administration ophthalmic devices panel.

## 1982

**James Helmers** was elected Vice President to the North Central states Optometric Council (NCSOC) in May 2003.

**Bob Grazian** and his wife, Julie, have two children. Daughter Natalie, 9, performed a dance solo at the San Diego County Fair in Del Mar last summer. She is in the fourth grade. Son Daniel, 12, is in the seventh grade and recently placed first in the doubles competition of the Coronado Youth Tennis Classic.



## 1983

**Millicent Knight** was married to Harvey L. Echols, MD, on September 7, 2002.

## 1988

**Pamela Lowe** was elected President of the Illinois Optometric Association in October. She and her husband George, along with their two boys, Cody, 12, and Trevor, 8, surfed at La Jolla while enjoying the AOA Congress in San Diego last June.



## 1990

**Vince Brandys** was elected to the office of Secretary/Treasurer of the North Central states Optometric Council (NCSOC) in May 2003. NCSOC represents 10 states in the Midwest and is one of three partners in the Midwest Vision Conference and Expo held annually in May in Rosemont, Ill.

**Reem Kandah Wlaschin** was married in 1991 and has three children: Josette, 9, Kyle, 7, and Callista, 5. Last spring, she and a partner opened a private practice, Clifton Park Eye Care Associates in Clifton Park, New York. It is geared toward a relaxed atmosphere with an emphasis on primary care, laser co-management, CRT, specialty contact lens fit, and treatment of eye disease.

## 1992

**Tom Kemperas** recently celebrated the fifth anniversary of his private practice in South Elgin, Ill. He lives in Algonquin, Ill., with his wife, Elaine, and three children: Lesli, 6, Jacob, 3, and Nathan, 1.

## 1994

**Kevin and Ashley Crouch** practice in Sioux Falls, SD, at the Crouch Vision Clinic. They have three children: Ethan, 5, Lauren, 3, and Allison, 2. Kevin was elected to the Board of Directors of the South Dakota Optometric Society last spring.

## 1998

In September, **Tom Rene** was in a serious car accident that has left him paralyzed from the waist down. His wife, Rachel, has set up a fund to help with the rehabilitation expenses. Contributions should be made payable to American Express or Thomas J. Rene and sent to: *Angie M. McCarthy, Financial Advisor, American Express Financial Advisors, IDS Life Insurance Company, 2731 12th Ave. SW, Suite 320, Fargo, ND 58103. angela.m.mccarthy@aexp.com* Phone: (800) 279-2903/Phone: (701) 232-8886/Fax: (701) 364-5694

## 2000

**Suzanne McDonald-Acanne** and Steven Acanne were married on July 12, 2003. They are living in Windsor, Ontario, Canada.

We invite contributions to Eye on Alumni from all members of the ICO community. Please mail news to:

Vince Brandys, OD '90

Director of Alumni Relations, Illinois College of Optometry

3241 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60616

VBrandys@eyecare.ico.edu

(312) 949-7079



**Victor J. Connors,  
OD '71**



**Peter H. Kehoe,  
OD '84**

## ICO Alumni Assume AOA Leadership Positions

Victor J. Connors, OD '71, was elected President of the Board of Trustees of the American Optometric Association at the 106th Annual AOA Congress & 33rd Annual AOSA Conference, held in San Diego, Calif. this year.

In addition to Dr. Connors, Peter H. Kehoe, OD '84, FFAO, serves on the 11-member AOA Board. Dr. Kehoe is also Vice President of the ICO Alumni Council.

## ICO Alumni Elected Officers of the Illinois Optometric Association

Officers for the 2003-2004 year were elected at the October convention of the Illinois Optometric Association. All are ICO alumni:

Pam Lowe, OD '88, President  
Dennis Rabe, OD '87, President-Elect  
Tim Williams, OD '95, Secretary/Treasurer  
Steve Leon, OD '80, Immediate Past President  
Charlotte Nielsen, OD '92, Trustee  
Robert Blumthal, OD '81, Trustee  
Dennis Brtva, OD '84, Trustee  
Gregg Eubanks, OD '81, Trustee  
Louise Sclafani, OD '89, Trustee.  
2003 OD of the Year: R. Tracy Williams, OD '79  
2003 Young OD of the Year: Sandra Bury, OD '95



**Deannanda Roder Palansky,  
1962-2003**

Dee's passion was quality patient care. Her patients loved her. A gift in her memory will continue her legacy by supporting students and our profession. We can all continue to enjoy Dee's beautiful smile and generous spirit through the Deannanda Roder Scholarship Fund.

Sincerely,  
Millicent L. Knight, OD '87  
ICO Trustee

## In Loving Memory of Rete Sander

ICO's Chief Financial Officer.  
February 7, 1946 to October 1, 2003



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## Obituaries

### William J. Ball

William J. Ball, CCO '51, died in July 2003, at his home in Paris, Ill. Ball practiced optometry for 35 years, serving as a member in both the American and Illinois Optometric Associations. He was also a member of the Knights of Columbus, the Kiwanis and the Lions Club. He is survived by his wife.

### Charles R. Fawcett

Charles R. Fawcett, NICO '50, died June 24, 2003, of pancreatic cancer. He was 79. Fawcett practiced optometry in Chicago for 20 years before moving to Rockford, Ill. He retired last April. He is survived by his wife Dorothy, four children and one granddaughter.

### Leroy D. Goldfarb

Leroy D. Goldfarb, CCO '51, passed away on June 24, 2003. He practiced optometry in New Egypt, NJ, until September 2000. He is survived by his wife Sondra and two daughters.

### Joseph C. Lis

Joseph C. Lis, NICO '49, passed away on April 20, 2003.

### Deannanda Roder Palansky

Deannanda Roder Palansky, OD '87, died July 20, 2003, in Melrose Park, Ill. She was the owner of Westgrove Vision Center of Downers Grove, Ill., and a member of the Downers Grove area Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Palansky is survived by her husband, David Palansky. She was 41.

### Andrew Perez

Andrew Perez, 82, MCO '48, passed away May 5, 2003. A Chicago native, Perez was a former high school teacher and Tuskegee Airman in addition to being an optometrist. He was a longtime member of the Illinois Optometric Association. His is survived by his wife, Bobbie.

# Giving



## Former President, Dr. Charles F. Mullen, still looking out for ICO

This year, after serving the Illinois College of Optometry with distinction from 1996 to 2002, Charles F. Mullen, along with his wife Rita, have made a commitment of \$25,000 in support of the ambulatory surgery and treatment center initiative at ICO. One of Dr. Mullen's career achievements is the fruitful partnership he developed with the University of Chicago Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Science while he was president at ICO. This gift will support capital expenses for the project while also giving back to an organization that has meant a great deal to him.

"I shall always remember my time at ICO as the highlight of my career," Mullen says. "I have never worked with a better group of educators, administrators and staff. My best wishes for the College's continued success."

## Furthering a Loved Profession, Dr. and Mrs. Mizener Establish a \$25,000 Gift Annuity

At age 78, Dr. Floyd Mizener still works passionately on behalf of optometry. In addition to lobbying for legislation to improve eye care for the people of Illinois, he and his wife, Shirley, have established a \$25,000 charitable gift annuity to benefit ICO.

"I want to ensure that our profession remains strong," says Dr. Mizener. "Supporting ICO by establishing a charitable gift annuity helps me accomplish this goal. I encourage others to look into the benefits of this type of gift. Shirley and I are very pleased."

## Support to Dr. Michael Volin for Research on Role of Proteins

The Illinois Society for the Prevention of Blindness has awarded \$3,000 to Dr. Michael Volin for his research on acute anterior uveitis, a common eye inflammation of the iris and neighboring tissues that can lead to glaucoma and blindness. Dr. Volin will study a family of mucin proteins for their role in uveitis and as possible therapeutic targets.

## Pearle Vision Foundation a Real Gem

The Pearle Vision Foundation has awarded \$10,000 to Dr. Brian Caden in support of the learning disability clinic in the Illinois Eye Institute. "The continuing generosity of the Pearle Vision Foundation is helping us to provide multi-disciplinary services to help remediate our patients' vision and learning problems so they may succeed in the classroom as more efficient learners," Dr. Caden said. The Foundation has previously supported the learning disability clinic with awards totaling \$50,000 over the past five years.

## FRAXA Supports Research in Autism

The FRAXA Research Foundation is supporting the efforts of Dr. Sandra Block and Dr. Dominick Maino on a grant to Dr. Elizabeth Berry-Kravis of Rush University Medical Center. The researchers are testing new applications of a drug for adults with fragile X syndrome or autism. The goal of the study is to determine if the drug might be useful to enhance long-term thinking and learning skills in these patients by improving memory, language, attention, and behavioral functioning.



# Leadership Circle

Reflects giving from July 1, 2002 through Sept. 30, 2003

## Nearly \$50,000 pledged to support Vision of Hope Health Alliance

The Michael Reese Health Trust and the Washington Square Health Foundation have made grants to pilot the Vision of Hope Health Alliance (VOHHA) program for one year. VOHHA builds on the success of the Vision of Hope (VOH) program, where a network of community organizations and agencies refer uninsured, underinsured and indigent adults to the Illinois Eye Institute (IEI) for eyecare services.

The Michael Reese Health Trust awarded \$25,000 to the program in support of eyewear for VOHHA patients, and the Washington Square Health Foundation made a grant of \$17,500 toward program evaluation and to hire a case worker.

Through VOHHA, Illinois Eye Institute is expanding the network of community partners from VOH to include Federally Qualified Health Centers. This will develop a comprehensive delivery system designed to streamline and integrate primary health care services, eye care services, and preventive education for medically underserved adults in the Chicago area.

## Thank you Reunion Sponsors!

On behalf of the 8,000 members of the alumni community, the College would like to acknowledge the following organizations for their generous support of the 2003 Reunion Weekend:

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